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HISTORY OF EUROPE

“BELLUM maxime omnium memorabile, quæ unquam gesta sint, me scripturum; quod, Hannibale duce, Carthaginienses cum populo Romano gessere. Nam neque validiores opibus ullæ inter se civitates gentesque contulerunt arma, neque his ipsis tantum unquam virium aut roboris fuit: et haud ignotas belli artes inter se, sed expertas, primo Punico conserebant bello: odiis etiam prope majoribus certârunt quam viribus: et adeo varia belli fortuna ancepsque Mars fuit, ut propius periculum fuerint qui vicerunt.”—LIVY, lib. xxi.



Sir B. West.

T. W. Harland.

GEORGE IIIRD

HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM

THE COMMENCEMENT OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

TO THE

RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS

IN MDCCCXV

BY

ARCHIBALD ALISON, L.L.D.

F. R. S. E.

New Edition, with Portraits

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HISTORY OF EUROPE.

CHAPTER LVII.

CAMPAIGN OF ASPERN.

IMMEDIATELY after the battle of Echmühl, Napoleon, clearly perceiving the expediency of striking at the heart of his enemy's power before the consternation consequent on the disasters in Bavaria had subsided, issued orders in all directions for the concentration of his forces towards the Austrian capital. Orders were despatched on the 24th to Eugene, to press forward in the Italian plains ; to Bernadotte, who had assumed the command of the Saxons at Dresden, without a moment's delay to enter Bohemia by the northern frontier ; and to Poniatowski, who commanded the Polish army, to invade Galicia, and endeavour to excite an insurrection in that province against the Austrian domination.* Every preparation was also made for moving the whole Grand Army, with the

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

1.

Measures of
Napoleon
for a grand
concentric
attack upon
Vienna.

Atlas,
Plate 53.

* To Eugene he wrote—"Advance in full confidence ; the Emperor is about to move into the interior of Austria ; the enemy will not keep their ground before you any more than they have done in Bavaria. Their army, defeated in its most cherished projects, is totally demoralised." To Bernadotte at Dresden — "Napoleon is about to march upon Vienna, and he expects, with the greatest impatience, your arrival in Bohemia, to co-operate with the Grand Army, which will at once render disposable the corps of Davoust, now left in observation at Ratisbon." To Poniatowski—"That he fully relied on his zeal in the common cause, and that, as the Emperor was about to march upon Vienna, now was the moment for him to enter Galicia."—*See the original Letters in* PELET, ii. 172, 173.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Pel. ii.
171, 173.
Thib. vii.
243. Sav.
iv. 59.

2.
Defensive
measures
of the
Archduke
Charles.

exception of Davoust's corps, which was left at Ratisbon to observe the Archduke, down the valley of the Danube, into the interior of the monarchy ; and, by daybreak on the 26th, a hundred thousand men were in full march for the Inn and Vienna. At the same time, to impose upon Prussia, and overawe the numerous malcontents in the north of Germany, a corps of observation was formed, under the orders, first of Kellermann, and afterwards of Junot, which, though consisting only of fourteen thousand men, was pompously announced in the bulletins as numbering fifty thousand combatants.¹

The situation of the Archduke Charles was now embarrassing in the highest degree. By having been driven from the valley of the Danube, and compelled to take refuge in the mountains of Bohemia, the approach to the capital was left unguarded, save by Hiller's corps and that of the Archduke Louis, thirty-five thousand strong, which were wholly inadequate to arrest the march of the mighty conqueror. An ordinary general, indeed, responsible to his superiors, would hesitate to advance into the interior of the Austrian monarchy, leaving seventy-five thousand men on one flank in the Bohemian mountains, and the insurgent Tyrol, secure in inaccessible Alps, on the other, to menace or cut off his lines of communication. But it was not the character of Napoleon to be deterred by such obstacles. On the contrary, it was distinctly foreseen, what the event speedily proved was the case, that the French Emperor, relying on the power and terror of the army under his immediate command, would hurry forward to the capital, and trust to his never-failing resources to dissipate any assemblages on his flanks or rear by which his communication might be threatened. Impressed with these ideas, Prince Charles despatched orders on the 23d to Hiller, to retard as much as possible the advance of the enemy ; to the Archduke John, to retreat towards the Hereditary States ; while he himself, after forming a junction with Bellegarde,

April 23.

exerted himself to the utmost in reorganising his army, and, with the consent of the Emperor Francis, despatched a courier with a dignified letter proposing an exchange of prisoners, and hinting at more important negotiations to Napoleon, who arrived, however, at the French headquarters after they had already been established in Upper Austria, and too late to arrest the dreaded march of the conqueror to Vienna.^{1*}

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

April 28,
¹ Erz. Johan.
Feld. 49.
Stat. 178,
182. Pel. ii.
173, 179.

The Emperor's dispositions being all completed, the Grand Army was, to a certain extent, divided: Davoust, whose corps, exhausted by the fatiguing marches it had undergone, and seriously weakened by the losses of the campaign, stood in need alike of reinforcement and repose, was left at Ratisbon to guard the passage of the Danube, and watch the retiring columns of the Archduke; Lefebvre, with the Bavarians, was detached into the Tyrol, to make head against the insurrection in that province, which was daily assuming a more menacing aspect; while the Emperor himself, at the head of the corps of Massena, Lannes, and Bessières, still, notwithstanding all the losses of the campaign, above eighty thousand strong, proceeded direct by the great road along the southern side of the Danube to Vienna. Vandamme followed at a little distance, with the troops of the Confederation, eighteen thousand more; and as soon as Bernadotte, with the Saxons, who was toiling round the outer frontier of the Bohemian moun-

3.
Dispositions
of Napoleon.

* To his brother the Emperor, the Archduke wrote—"Finding it impossible to keep my ground with a river such as the Danube in my rear against a victorious enemy in front, I have deemed it expedient to cross to the northern bank and form a junction with Count Bellegarde. You are aware that all the operations of the campaign were based on the probability of early success, and on the co-operation of the troops of the Rhenish Confederacy, who have, in fact, declared against us. Would it not be expedient, then, to try the result of a negotiation, before the enemy has invaded Austria, and while in Italy and the Tyrol there remain successes to counterbalance his advantages?" The Emperor despatched Count Stadion with his reply, which approved of overtures by the Archduke, provided they did not compromise his dignity. The latter accordingly wrote to Napoleon on the 30th April—"Your Majesty has announced your arrival by a salvo of artillery; I had no time to reply to it; but though hardly informed of your presence, I speedily discovered it by the losses which I sustained. You have taken many prisoners from me, and I have taken some

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

April 26.

¹ Pel. ii.
180, 181.
Sav. iv. 60,
61. Stut.
182, 187.

4.
March of
the army
to Ebers-
berg on the
Traun.
April 28.

tains, relieved Davoust at Ratisbon, he too was to follow in the same direction with his corps, still numbering forty thousand men. Every disposition being thus made to secure his rear, and station his troops in echelon, so as to secure his communications, Napoleon left Ratisbon on the 26th, and arrived the same day at Landshut, where he found the whole Guard, both horse and foot, assembled, having just come up from Spain. This veteran corps, fully twenty thousand strong, proved a most important addition to his invading force ; and when it is recollected that in the beginning of January it was at Astorga, at the foot of the Galician mountains,* it must be admitted that few more rapid marches or strenuous efforts are on record in the whole annals of military achievement.¹

Meanwhile, the vanguard pressed on with ceaseless vigour, and soon the advanced posts were on the Inn. The rocky banks of that river, flanked by the ramparts of Brannau and Passau, afforded an apparently favourable situation for arresting the advance of the enemy ; but the vast line, above thirty leagues in length, would have required a hundred thousand men for its defence, and the Austrian general had not above a third of that number at his disposal. He therefore made no attempt to defend it. For the same reason he contented himself with breaking down the bridges over the Salza, which had the effect of retarding by two days the advance of

thousands from you in quarters where you were not personally present. I propose to exchange them, man for man, rank for rank ; and, if that proposal proves agreeable to you, point out the place where it may be possible to carry it into effect. I feel flattered, sire, in combating the greatest captain of the age ; but I should esteem myself more happy if Heaven had chosen me to be the instrument in procuring for my country a durable peace. Whatever may be the events of war, or the chances of an accommodation, I pray your Majesty to believe that my desires will always outstrip your wishes, and that I am equally honoured by meeting your Majesty either with the sword or the olive branch in your hand." — But all this graceful flattery was thrown away ; for, before it reached Napoleon, he was far advanced in the valley of the Danube, and the terrible combat of Ebersberg had opened to him the gates of Upper Austria, after which nothing remained to stay his triumphant march to Vienna.—ERZ. JOHANN'S *Feldzug in jahre 1809*, 55, 56 ; and PELET, ii. 176, 179.

* *Ante*, Chap. LV. § 46.

the French army. Napoleon arrived at Brannau on the 1st May, and pressed on with ceaseless activity the march of his troops ; while Hiller, abandoning the woody range and unformed intrenchments of the Kirchbergwald, took post at the formidable position of EBERSBERG, to defend the passage of the Traun, and cover the wooden bridge, which at Mauthausen, or a little farther down the Danube, formed an important line of communication with the northern bank of the river. It was of the most vital consequence to gain possession of this post, for a few hours would suffice, with a corps such as Hiller's, to put it in a posture of defence ; and if the Archduke, who was following by Budweis down the left bank, should arrive before it was forced, it might retard, or altogether defeat, the projected march upon Vienna.¹

CHAP.
LVII.1809.
May 1.

¹ Jom. iii.
181. Pel.
ii. 181, 199.
Sav. iv. 60,
61. Stut.
182, 187.

The scenery in the vicinity of Salzburg, particularly that of the Königs See, the valley of Bercholzgaden leading to it, the defile above Hallein, the Traun, Aber and Alter Sees, and the whole valley from the Danube up to Gasterns, is perhaps the most magnificent in Europe. It rivals the Grande Chartreuse in grandeur, and unites to its romantic character the sublimity of the Gasteren Thal and the Oeschinen Thal, at the upper extremity of the valley of Kandersteg in Switzerland, the finest and most impressive scenery in the vast amphitheatre of the central Alps. No words, in particular, can do justice to the Königs See—a noble sheet of water, eight or ten miles in length, thirty miles to the south of Salzburg, shrouded amidst stupendous mountains, whose summits, ten thousand feet high, wrapped in eternal snow, almost overhang the lake which nestles in their bosom. Vast forests of fir lie immediately below the region of rock and snow in these lofty piles ; and the cliffs which shut in the lake, several thousand feet in perpendicular height, descend abrupt and sheer to the water's edge, varied at intervals by noble woods of beech and oak, whose tints,² especially

5.
Description of the
scenery near
Salzburg.

² Personal
observation.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.
6.

Causes of
its extra-
ordinary
beauty.

in autumn, add inexpressible beauty to the near points of this matchless landscape.

The great superiority which the Alps in this quarter possess over those in the central cantons of Switzerland consists in this, that from their not rising from so elevated a plateau, the pine and the fir do not occur so uniformly and early in the scene ; but rich forests of walnut, sycamore, beech, and oak, surmount, in the first instance, the green and grassy vales, where mountain freedom and laborious industry have spread a velvet carpet amidst the shapeless piles of rocks, which primeval earthquakes have detached from the overhanging mountains. The pine and larch occur in a more elevated region, forming a sable band between the brilliant tints of the foliage beneath, and the pure glitter of the snow, or the gray hue of the rocks above. The mountains are not of such height as to be overloaded, or have their ravines filled with snow ; naked, or sprinkled only in the upper parts with a silvery mantle, they exhibit all their romantic forms to the eye ; and the enormous strata are disposed with such regularity, that, at the distance even of twenty or thirty miles, every layer is distinctly visible ; and the traveller feels as if he were approaching the ruined castles of the giants of the earth, some standing erect, some cast down and scattered in fragments around. Yet so steep and perpendicular are their sides, and so completely do they in many places overhang the lakes, that in rowing along you can see reflected in the mirror all the gradations from the smooth shaven meadow, on the margin of the water, through the inaccessible cliffs rising abruptly from their sides, to the dark forests of the middle zone, and bare rocks of the upper region—you can touch with your hand the snowy summits of the mountains.*

Descending from the lofty summit of the Alps by

* The author visited these incomparable scenes two-and-twenty years ago ; but the assistance of numerous sketches then made is not requisite to recall the features of the scenery to his memory ; they are indelibly imprinted there, and will remain engraven to the latest hour of his life.

lateral branches to the great valley of the Danube, several mountain streams between Munich and Vienna present scenes, the beauty of which is for ever engraven on the mind of the traveller, and afford, at the same time, favourable positions to dispute the advance of an invading army. Of these, the most impetuous and savage in its character is the Traun, which, issuing from the wild cliffs of the Alter and Aber Sees, and descending through the Traun See, makes its way through narrow ravines and steep pine-clad hills to the Danube, a little above Ebersberg. A long wooden bridge crosses the stream in front of that place, which is commanded by the precipitous heights and old castle on its right or western bank: another existed some leagues higher up, at Wels. But the road over the latter crossed, a little farther on, another mountain torrent, the Kremsmünster: and as all these bridges were of wood, easily destroyed, and requiring a considerable time for their reparation, the wing of the invader's army, which attempted the passage by that circuitous route, was liable to very serious interruption. Everything, therefore, recommended an immediate attack upon the bridge of Ebersberg; and Massena, who commanded the advanced guard, and was perfectly alive to all these considerations, resolved to pursue the enemy with such vigour, that they would not have time to apply the torch to the combustible arches.¹

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

7.
Description
of the posi-
tion of
Ebersberg,

¹ Pel. ii.
198, 203.
Stut. 176,
184. Jom.
ii. 181. Per-
sonal obser-
vation.

The prudence of this determination, considering the vital importance of anticipating the Archduke at the bridge of Mauthausen, could not be disputed; but, when the French arrived on the left bank of the Traun, beyond Scharlantz, in front of Ebersberg, the spectacle which presented itself was sufficient to daunt the most intrepid breasts. Right in front of them lay the bed of the impetuous Traun, nearly eight hundred yards broad, intersected by many sand-banks and islands, clothed with stunted wood, traversed only by a single chaussée, ter-

8.
And of the
Austrian
corps which
occupied it.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

minating in a bridge three hundred yards long, over the largest arm of the river, which flows in a deep and rapid torrent, close to the right bank. The bridge, closed at its western extremity by the gate of Ebersberg, was enfiladed by the houses of the town, which were all filled with musketeers, and commanded along its whole extent by a plentiful array of artillery, disposed on the heights above. On the summit of the whole stood the old square castle, its walls bristling with bayonets, and with artillery planted on its mouldering battlements, to command the bridge, at the distance of a hundred toises. The hills, or rather swelling eminences next the river, were covered with deep masses of infantry interspersed with powerful batteries of cannon, who stood prepared to dispute the passage; while, immediately in their rear, rose a second range of heights, considerably more elevated than the former, clothed with pines, over which, equally with those in front, the road passed, and which afforded another position stronger than the first, to which, if driven from their original ground, the enemy might retire.¹

¹ Personal observation. Pel. ii. 202, 205. Stat. 192, 195.

9.
Massena resolves to attack. Desperate gallantry of the French.

May 3.

It required no ordinary resolution to attack, with no greater force, thirty-five thousand men, supported by eighty pieces of cannon, in such a position; but Massena burned with desire to signalise himself by some brilliant exploit in a campaign where hitherto he had not had an opportunity to do so. He was in hopes, too, that, if the combat should be prolonged for any length of time, he would be aided by a flank attack from Marshal Lannes, who was to pass at Wels and force his way across the lesser streams in his front. He resolved, therefore, to hazard an assault. The French troops at that period were in such a state of exultation from their triumphs, that, under the eye of the Emperor at least, nothing was impracticable to their audacity. Four battalions of Austrian grenadiers had been injudiciously left on the left bank, occupying some houses and walled enclosures, which formed a sort of *tête-de-pont*.

Upon them the attack was first made, and being speedily overwhelmed by numbers, they were driven at the point of the bayonet along the chaussée; and, in spite of a gallant resistance, all the islands and little bridges over the branches of the torrent were wrested from the enemy. But when the pursuers reached the long bridge over the principal branch of the Traun, the fire of grape and musketry from the batteries and houses on the opposite side was so violent that the head of the column hesitated, and recoiled. Instantly General Cohorn, a descendant of the illustrious engineer of the same name, advanced to their head, and, animated by his gallant example, the French troops returned to the charge. A frightful scene, exceeding in horror even the terrible passage of the bridge of Lodi, ensued. At the point of the bayonet, amidst showers of balls, the heroic French, headed by Cohorn, pursued the retiring Austrians; while the troops on the opposite bank, seeing the enemy's colours advancing through a cloud of smoke, and in the midst of a frightful contest, closed the gate at the further end, and fired incessantly with grape, round-shot, and canister, indiscriminately on friend and foe.¹

Numbers of the Imperialists, threatened with death on both sides, threw themselves into the water, and were swept away by the impetuous torrent; others were trampled down by the advancing columns, or sought refuge in the wooded islands, and were made prisoners. Several ammunition waggons blew up on the middle of the bridge, and the dauntless foemen were scattered in the air by the tremendous explosion. But nothing could withstand the enthusiastic gallantry of the French. Side by side, Cohorn and Campy, aide-de-camp to Massena, headed the column: soon the gate and palisades flanking it were levelled by the pioneers, and the assailants penetrated into the town. Here, however, they were exposed at once to a plunging fire from the castle, and a flanking one from the houses, while fresh battalions assailed them

CHAP.
LVII.
1809.

¹ Sav. iv. 60,
61. Jom. ii.
181. Pel. ii.
202. Stut.
194, 196.

10.
After a
frightful
struggle,
the post is
still main-
tained.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Pel. ii. 202,
209. Stat.
194, 199.
Sav. iv. 61,
62. Jom. ii.
181, 182.

in front. Torn in pieces by the terrific discharge, to which, in the crowded streets of an ancient village, they could make no reply, they speedily fell victims to their daring valour. In a few minutes two-thirds of their number were stretched upon the pavement. The survivors were driven back in confusion to the entrance of the bridge; its barricades, hastily re-established, were closed, lest it should again fall into the hands of the enemy, and the Austrians were preparing a column to clear it of the assailants, and set fire to the combustibles already provided, which, in the suddenness of the former assault, had not been fired.¹

11.
After a
desperate
struggle,
the French
gain the
pass.

Massena, however, who had now come up to the opposite bank, was well aware of the importance of following up the extraordinary advantage gained by the brilliant courage of his advanced guard. Accordingly, he instantly despatched powerful succours to Cohorn and his handful of heroes, now cooped up between the gate at the end of the bridge and the rapidly increasing forces of his assailants. Three fresh brigades, headed by Claparède, were soon passed over; and at length the division *le Grand* having come up, it also was sent forward,* through a storm of grape and musketry, over the bridge, and lent its powerful aid to the attacking force. Strengthened by such assistance, Claparède regained his ground in the village, and gradually forced his way up the narrow lanes leading to the castle, and stormed that stronghold itself. Hiller, however, recovered from his first surprise, renewed his efforts to regain the post: two fresh divisions came up, drove the French out of the chateau, and forced them down again into the low streets adjoining the bridge. Again the French returned to the assault: Massena ordered a division to cross over farther up the river to the right, in order to attack the left of the Imperialists,

* As *le Grand* debouched from the bridge, the French general in command there rather officiously tendered his advice:—"I want none of your advice," said he, "but room for the head of my columns;" and instantly passed on to the attack of the castle.—PELET, ii. 211.

while engaged with their unwearied antagonists in front. Amidst a frightful storm of shot, le Grand swiftly passed over the narrow open space which separated the town from the castle: but even in that distance of two hundred yards, the path of every regiment was marked by a long and melancholy train of slain. Arrived at the gates, they were found to be closed, and the whole head of the column was swept away by the plunging fire from the battlements. Again reinforced, le Grand returned to the assault, under cover of a tremendous fire of all arms, which brought down every exposed man on the castle; the sappers rushed up to the gates, which they broke through, and the heroic garrison, cut off from all external support by the columns which had got round it on the eastern side, laid down its arms.¹

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Pel. ii. 209,
213. Stat.
203, 205.
Nor. iii.
209.

Hiller now, seeing the key of the position carried, gave the signal for retreat: but, to troops so intermingled and closely engaged with the enemy, it was no easy matter to obey this order. The division which had crossed farther up the river already threatened their left flank, for in the hurry of this sudden attack there had not been time to break down the bridges of the Kremsmünster, and other streams which discharge themselves into the Traun above Ebersberg, which, if destroyed, would for some hours at least have secured that flank from attack. With great difficulty the Austrians withdrew to the position behind the town, where another combat not less obstinate and bloody took place. Every road, every pathway leading up the ascent, was the scene of a desperate struggle. The pastures, the corn fields, the pine woods on the crest of the ridge, were all the theatre of mortal combat; while the flames of Ebersberg in the hollow behind, the trampling of horsemen over the dead and dying, the cries of the wounded, and the cheers of the soldiers who successively arrived on the opposite bank, formed a scene surpassing all but the field of Eylau in circumstances of horror. The combat, however, was too critical and violent to admit of

12.
Hiller
falls back
towards
Vienna.

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LVII.

1809.

any relaxation; and as the French cavalry of the Guard came up to the opposite side, they were hastily hurried forward, and, trampling under-foot the dead bodies and wounded of either army, forced their way through the burning houses, with loud shouts, banners waving, and all the animation of war, to the front of the battle. Still the Austrians, with invincible resolution, made good the post on the ridge behind; but as evening approached, the masses on their left flank which had crossed at Wels, and other places in the upper part of the stream, became so threatening that Hiller drew off his troops, and fell back in the night to Enns, where he burned the bridge over the river of the same name, and continued his retreat towards Amstetten. In this terrific combat few trophies were taken by the victors; the French could only boast of four guns and two standards wrested from the enemy, while on each side six thousand brave men had fallen a sacrifice to their heroic sense of patriotic duty.¹*

¹ Pel. ii. 209,
215. Stut.
202, 207.
Norv. iii.
209. Jom.
ii. 182, 183.

13.

Advance of
the French
army to-
wards
Vienna.

This severe loss altogether disabled Hiller from making any further resistance to the advance of the invading army to Vienna; and he accordingly fell back, as fast as the encumbrance of so many wounded would permit, to the neighbourhood of the capital. Napoleon arrived on the opposite side of the Traun to Ebersberg, during the latter period of the combat, and passed through the town soon after it had ceased. However much inured to scenes of carnage, he was strongly impressed by the unwonted horrors which there presented themselves, where brave men by thousands lay weltering in their blood, amidst burning rafters and smoking ruins, and the first who had fallen were thrown into the river, or crushed under the

* The author has been the more particular in the description of this combat, not only from its peculiar and terrible character, but because the castle and bridge of Ebersberg form well-known objects to every traveller who has visited Vienna; and it is desirable that the multitude of English who frequent that capital in quest of pleasure or amusement, should be aware of the heroic deeds of which the Gothic castle, under whose walls they pass, has been the theatre.

feet of the horses, or by the wheels of the artillery which had since passed over them.* He testified accordingly considerable indignation, both at Massena for provoking so desperate a contest, where a flank movement might have rendered it unnecessary; and at Lannes, whose corps was to cross at Wels, farther up the river, for not having made his dispositions so as to be up in time to take a part in the strife, by attacking the flank or rear of Hiller's corps. After passing Ebersberg, however, being uncertain of the movements of the Archduke, and fearful of advancing into the interior without being aware of the position of his principal adversary, he halted for two days at Enns, re-established the bridge, and collected a number of boats, which he already foresaw would be required for the difficult operation of crossing the Danube in front of Vienna; while his advanced guard, under Lannes and Massena, pursued their route by the great road to the capital.¹

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

From 4th
to 7th May.
¹ Stat. 201,
202. Pel. iii.
220, 235.
Jom. ii. 182,
183.

Anticipating a battle on the woody ridge which lies between St Polten and Vienna, the Emperor concentrated his troops before attempting the passage of that defile; but the precaution was unnecessary. Hiller had received orders to cross the Danube, and fall back with all his forces to the neighbourhood of the metropolis, and occupy the islands until the arrival of the Archduke. Meanwhile Napoleon, continuing his advance along the Danube, perceived, from the Abbey of Mlk, situated on a high rock, a considerable encampment of soldiers on the left bank of the river. Devoured with anxiety to know to which army they belonged, he despatched a sergeant of the Old Guard and six chosen men; who soon made their

14.
It arrives
before that
city.

May 8.

* During this terrible action, the bridge and street immediately leading from it were so encumbered with the wounded, that Massena was driven to the cruel necessity of commanding the fresh troops which came up to throw their maimed comrades into the river; and such of them as were struck down were treated in the same manner by those who next came up to the attack. There was no alternative, for else the causeway would soon have become impassable, and the division in front have been entirely cut off. — See CADET DE GASSI-COURT'S *Voyage en Autriche à la suite de l'Armée Française*, 1809, p. 173.

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LVII.

1809.

way across in a boat, and brought over three Austrian soldiers, who reported that they belonged to the Archduke's army, and that he was advancing by forced marches, in hopes of arriving at the capital before the enemy. This important intelligence made Napoleon redouble his activity ; orders were given to Massena to watch, with the utmost vigilance, all the points where a passage of the Danube could be effected, while Lannes and Bessières were directed to advance with increased celerity to the capital. All arms accordingly pressed on with the utmost expedition ; and, on the 10th of May, being exactly a month from the time when the Austrian standards crossed the Inn, the French eagles appeared before the walls of Vienna.¹

May 9.
¹ Pel. ii. 220,
254. Stat.
203, 212.
Jom. ii.
182, 186.

15.
Napoleon's
observations
on Richard
Cœur-de-
Lion.

Riding from Molk towards St Polten, with Berthier and Lannes, the Emperor's eyes were riveted on the Gothic towers of Dürrenstein, the scene of the captivity of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, which rose in gloomy magnificence at some distance on the other side of the Danube. His attention was instantly absorbed by that interesting object. He could speak for long on no other subject. "He also," said Napoleon, "had been a warrior in Syria and Palestine. He was more fortunate than we at St Jean d'Acre, but not more valiant than you, my brave Lannes. He beat the great Saladin. And yet hardly had he returned to Europe, than he fell into the hands of persons who certainly were of a very different calibre. He was sold by a Duke of Austria to an Emperor of Germany, who has been rescued from oblivion by that act alone. The last of his court, Blondel, alone remained faithful to him ; but his nation made great sacrifices for his deliverance." Still keeping his eyes riveted on the towers, he continued,—“These were barbarous times, which they have the folly to represent to us as so heroic ; when the father sacrificed his children, the wife her husband, the subject his sovereign, the soldier his general, and all without shame or disguise, from the mere thirst of gold

or power ! How much are times changed now ! what progress has civilisation made in our time ! You have seen emperors, kings, in my power, as well as the capitals of their states, and I exacted from them neither ransom nor sacrifice of honours. And that successor of Leopold and Henry, who is already more than half in our power, will not be worse treated on this occasion than the preceding !” How deceitful is self-love ! The ransom which Napoleon had exacted, on the very last occasion, from Austria (£5,000,000) and from Prussia (£16,000,000), far exceeded all that feudal cupidity had ever extorted ; and in the dark annals of Gothic crime and treachery, nothing ever outdid the cruelty of the French Revolution, or the perfidy of his own seizure of the thrones of the Spanish peninsula.¹

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Pelet, ii.
246, 247.

Though deprived, by the passage of Hiller to the northern bank of the Danube, of the corps on which it had chiefly relied for protection, Vienna was by no means destitute of resources. The external barriers, indeed, were not in a condition to make any defence ; and the Archduke Maximilian, to whom the command was intrusted, withdrew at once from the rich and extensive suburbs into the ancient walled capital. The walls were constructed, however, of solid granite, well armed with artillery, and capable of being supplied to any extent from the resources of the arsenal ; while four thousand regular troops, and eight thousand landwehr and volunteers, were in arms within the city. Great efforts were made to rouse the inhabitants ; and patriotic ardour was at its highest pitch. The people talked of their glorious resistance, one hundred and twenty years before, to the Turks, and loudly proclaimed their resolution to emulate the noble defence of Saragossa in more recent times. But all history demonstrates, that there is one stage of civilisation when the inhabitants of a metropolis are capable of such a sacrifice in defence of their country, but only one ; and that, when past, it is never recovered.

16.
Ineffectual
attempt to
defend
Vienna.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

The event has proved that the Russians, in 1812, were in the state of progress when such a heroic act was possible; but that the inhabitants of Vienna and Paris had passed it. Most certainly the citizens of London would never have buried themselves under the ruins of the Bank, the Treasury, or Leadenhall Street, before capitulating to Napoleon. In fact, without supposing that the members of a highly civilised and opulent community have altogether lost their patriotic spirit, it is evident that the sacrifices which are unavoidable, if obstinate resistance is attempted by a city in the later stages of society, where wealth is concentrated, credit universal, and hundreds of thousands would at once be reduced to beggary by its stoppage, are so great, that no moral courage, however intrepid, is equal to the responsibility of incurring them.¹

¹ Pel. ii. 262,
270. Jom.
iii. 187.
Stut. 208,
215. Sav.
iv. 64, 66.

17.
Napoleon's
measures to
reduce
Vienna.

Atlas,
Plate 57.

Napoleon wisely trusted to two methods to effect the reduction of the city,—the cutting off its communication with the northern bank of the river, and the horrors of a bombardment. With this view, he directed Massena to make himself master of the island of Prater, while a similar attack was made on that of Jagerhaus by Lannes, so as to reach from both sides the great bridge of Spitz and Thabor. These attacks were entirely successful, for the Archduke had not forces sufficient to defend them; and such had been the confident security of the Aulic Council, that they had not taken the simple precaution of connecting the works of the place with the bridges of the Danube. At the same time a battery of twenty mortars was established nearly on the same ground from which the Turks had, a hundred and twenty years before, bombarded the city; and with such vigour were they served, that in the next ten hours they discharged three thousand projectiles into the capital; and already, in the course of the night, it was in flames in several quarters.²

May 12.
² Pel. ii. 262,
278. Thib.
vii. 255.
Jom. iii.
187. Stut.
209, 218.
Sav. iv. 65,
69.

At that period, there lay sick in the Imperial palace, directly opposite to the French batteries, and incapable of bearing removal to a place of safety, a young princess,

daughter of the illustrious house of Hapsburg. It was by the thunders of artillery, and the flaming light of bombs across the sky, that Napoleon's first addresses to the Archduchess MARIE LOUISE were paid. Informed of the dangerous situation of the noble invalid, he ordered the direction of the pieces to be changed; and while the midnight sky was incessantly streaked by burning projectiles, and conflagration was commencing in every direction around her, the future Empress of France remained secure and unharmed in the Imperial palace. Strange result of those days, not less of royal than national revolution! that a daughter of the Cæsars should be wooed and won by a soldier of fortune from Corsica: that French arms should be exerted to place an Austrian princess on the throne of Charlemagne: that the leader of a victorious invading host should demand her for his bride; and that the first acts of attention should be rendered amid the deep booming of the mortars, which, but for his interposition, would have consigned her father's palace to destruction.¹

Aware of the danger of his situation, if cut off from all communication with the Danube and the powerful armies on the north bank of that river, the Archduke Maximilian made an attempt, at one in the morning of the following day, to regain the Lusthaus, an important point, which would have hindered the formation of the bridge the French were preparing from the southern bank of the first island; but the attack, not supported with adequate force, was speedily repulsed. Despairing, after that check, of being able to maintain his ground in the capital, and intimidated by the sight of the flames which were bursting forth in many quarters, the Archduke resolved to abandon it to its fate. The troops of the line, accordingly, with the exception of a few hundred invalids, were withdrawn to the north bank by the great bridge of Thabor, which was immediately afterwards burned. They were just in time; for so rapid had been the progress of the

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1809.

18.
Danger of
the future
Empress
Marie
Louise.

¹ Pel. ii. 278.
Thib. vii.
255. Norv.
iii. 211, 212.

19.
The Arch-
duke Maxi-
milian
abandons
Vienna,
which capi-
tulates.

May 12.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

May 13.
1 Stat. 217,
224. Pel.
ii. 276, 289.
Jom. iii.
188. Sav.
iv. 67, 68.

20.
Positions
of the diffe-
rent corps
of the
French
armies in
the middle
of May.

Atlas,
Plate 53.

French troops between the battlements and the river, that in a few hours more their retreat would have been irrevocably cut off, and the bridge gained. General O'Reilly, who was left in command, now lost no time in signifying his readiness to capitulate; and the terms were soon agreed to, and ratified early on the following morning. They were the same as those granted in 1804, guaranteeing the security of private property of every description, but enforcing the surrender of all public stores, and in particular the magnificent arsenal, containing four hundred pieces of cannon, and immense artillery stores of every description. Fifty guns in addition, which were on their route for Hungary, were captured by Massena, before they had got many miles from the capital.¹

The capture of Vienna was a prodigious stroke for Napoleon, affording him, as it did, a fortified post on the Danube, amply provided with military stores of every description, and which it was impossible to starve out for fear of destroying the inhabitants of the metropolis. The French troops took possession of the gates at noon on the 13th, and at that period the positions of the different corps of their army were as follows:—The corps of Lannes, with four divisions of cuirassiers of the reserve cavalry, and all the Guards, were stationed at Vienna: Massena, between that capital and the Simmering, with his advanced posts occupying the Prater, and watching the banks of the Danube: Davoust, who had come up from Ratisbon, was advancing in echelon along the margin of that river, between Ebersberg and St Polten, with his headquarters at Mölk: Vandamme, with the Würtembergers under his orders, guarded the important bridge of Lintz; while Bernadotte, who had at length completed his circular march round Bohemia, with the Saxons,*

* Napoleon was exceedingly displeased at the tardy movements and inefficient condition of the Saxons during this period, and shortly before had addressed the following letter to their general, Bernadotte, on the subject: "The foot artillery of the Saxons is extremely defective. What I want is warlike troops, and experienced generals to direct their movements. The

and other troops of the Confederation, about thirty thousand strong, had arrived at Passau, and was advancing to form the reserve of the Grand Army. Lefebvre, with the Bavarians, was fully engaged in a desperate strife in the Tyrol; but independent of his corps, the Emperor had a hundred thousand men concentrated between Lintz and Vienna, besides a reserve of thirty thousand approaching to reinforce them from the upper Danube.¹ *

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¹ Pel. ii. 286,
288. Jom.
iii. 188, 190.

While these rapid successes were achieved by the Grand Army, the Archduke Charles, with a tardiness which is to this day inexplicable, was pursuing his route from Bohemia towards the capital. After his retreat from Ratisbon, on the 23d of April, he retired to Horasdiowitz, in the southern part of that province, and was followed by Davoust as far as Straubing, who so far imposed upon the prince as to make him believe that he was pursued by the whole French army. This natural but unfounded illusion was attended with the most unfortunate consequences. Conceiving that Hiller would be perfectly adequate to restrain any incursion of a detached corps towards the capital, he made his dispositions so as to draw upon himself the weight of the invading army, deeming that the most effectual way to ward off the danger from the capital. No sooner was he undeceived in this particular, than he despatched the most pressing orders to Hiller to defend his ground as long as possible, so as to give him time to join the main army by the bridges of Lintz or Mauthausen, and he himself set out by forced marches to join him at one or other of these points. It was to gain time for the effecting of this junction that Hiller, who had not force sufficient to make head at Lintz, maintained so desperate a resistance at

21.
Movements
of the Arch-
duke Charles
and position
of his army.

Saxons are incapable of acting by themselves. There is not one of their generals to whom I can venture to intrust a detached operation. With Frenchmen I can feel assured of energy and experience in the troops; but the Saxons can do nothing. It is indispensable that they should be strengthened and stimulated by the example of troops more warlike than themselves."—PELET, ii. 241.

* On entering Vienna, Napoleon addressed the following proclamation to

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Ebersberg. But that action took place on the 3d May, and on the evening of the same day the Archduke arrived at Budweiss with the bulk of his army, about forty leagues to the north-west of Vienna. At that place he remained *for three days*; a delay which was the more inexplicable, as he heard, in the course of the 4th, of the forcing of the bridge of Ebersberg, which in effect opened the road to the capital to the French army. In truth, he was impressed with the idea that Napoleon would never advance to Vienna while so formidable an army menaced his line of communication; and accordingly, instead of hastening towards it, he merely pushed on Kollowrath with twenty thousand men towards the bridge of Lintz, and sent orders to the Archduke John to abandon Italy, and make for the same point—vainly hoping that the concentration of such forces in his rear would compel Napoleon to abandon his attack on the capital.¹

May 8.
1 Pel.ii.253,
254. Stut.
230. Jom.
iii. 183.

22.
The Arch-
duke at
length ad-
vances to-
wards
Vienna.

Awakened, at length, by the pressing representations of the Archduke Maximilian, to the necessity of instantly providing for the protection of Vienna, he commanded Hiller—who, in obedience to his orders, had passed over, after the combat at Ebersberg, by the bridge of Mauthausen to the northern bank—to advance by forced marches to the metropolis; and, breaking up from Budweiss on the morning of the 8th, he himself followed in the same direction. But it was too late; the repose of three days at that place had given his indefatigable adversary the start of him by a day. Hiller received his orders on the 10th, at two in the morning, and, marching twelve leagues that day, reached, with his advanced

his troops:—"Soldiers! In a month after the enemy passed the Inn, on the same day, at the same hour, we entered Vienna. Their landwehrs, their levies *en masse*, their ramparts, created by the impotent rage of the princes of the house of Lorraine, have fallen at the first sight of you. The princes of that house have abandoned their capital, not like soldiers of honour, who yield to circumstances and the reverses of war, but as perjurers haunted by the sense of their own crimes. In flying from Vienna, their orders have been murder and conflagration: like Medea, they have with their own hands mas-

guard, Nussdorf, a league from Vienna, before night, but found the town already invested; while the Archduke advanced by Zivettel towards Krems, hoping still to be in time to throw himself between the invader and the capital. Notwithstanding all their efforts, however, they were too late. Hiller, indeed, occupied the isles of the Danube on the 11th, the day before the Archduke Maximilian withdrew from the city, but not in time to prevent its complete investment; and the advanced guard of the Archduke Charles reached the northern extremity of the bridges late on the evening of the 15th, when the enemy was already fully established in the capital. But for the delay at Budweiss, and the order to Hiller to cross over to the northern bank, the army would have been up in time to combat for Vienna; for on the 16th, the junction was fully effected with Hiller a few miles to the north of Vienna, on the left bank of the river; and as from Budweiss to that place is just six days' march, Prince Charles, who arrived at this first town on the 4th, might have reached the capital with ease on the evening of the 11th, twenty-four hours before it actually surrendered, and long before, if garrisoned by the united forces of Hiller and Maximilian, consisting of thirty thousand good troops, it could possibly have been reduced.¹

The disasters in Bavaria, and the rapid advance of Napoleon to Vienna, produced an immediate change on the aspect of affairs in the Italian plains. Cut short in the career of victory, not less by the necessity of making considerable detachments to the right and left, to watch the progress of Marmont in Dalmatia, and aid the insurrection in the Tyrol, than by the peremptory orders of

sacred their offspring. Soldiers! the people of Vienna—according to the expression of a deputation of the suburbs—abandoned, widowed, shall be the object of our regard. I take its good citizens under my special protection; as to the turbulent and wicked, they shall meet with exemplary justice. Let us exhibit no marks of haughtiness or pride, but regard our triumphs as a proof of the divine justice, which punishes, by our hands, the ungrateful and the perjured.”—THIBAudeau, vii. 256; *Moniteur*, 29th May 1809.

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May 13.

May 16.

¹ Pel. ii. 253,
258. *Jom.*
iii. 183, 185.
Stut. 230,
235.

23.
Retreat of
the Arch-
duke John
from Italy.

Atlas,
Plate 11.

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April 29.

the Archduke Charles to draw near to the Hereditary States for the defence of the capital, the Archduke John broke up from the position of Caldiero on the Adige. In order to conceal his real intentions, he made, on the 29th April, several attacks on the enemy, but without effecting his object; for Eugene was aware of the events in Bavaria, and had concentrated his troops to resume the offensive the moment that his adversary retired. Orders arrived on that day from Vienna, to suspend as little as possible his offensive operations in Italy; but to open a communication with Hiller, who was to fall back to the Enns; and to be prepared to maintain himself in Styria, Carinthia, and the Tyrol, as a vast fortress, where he could keep his ground though detached altogether from the other Imperial armies. The Archduke John, however, was of an opposite opinion, and, deeming it indispensable to concentrate all the forces of the monarchy in the centre of the Hereditary States, he stated his intentions of acting differently in a despatch to the Emperor Francis on 30th April, and on the first May commenced his retreat by Friuli. Eugene followed the enemy leisurely, and the Austrians reached the Brenta without sustaining any loss, where Prince John was distracted by new orders from the Archduke Charles, dated Cham, 29th April, directing him to co-operate with the intended movement of the general-in-chief, from the north bank of the Danube upon Lintz, so as to threaten the enemy's communications. But the progress of events both on the Danube and the Italian plains disconcerted all these projects, and rendered a retreat upon Vienna, in Prince John's opinion, a matter of necessity.¹

¹ Jom. iii. 224, 225.
Pel. iii. 180, 195. Erz. Johan, Feldz. 104, 107.

24.
Battle of
the Piave.
May 8.

Retired behind the Piave, the Archduke conceived it practicable to defend the course of that torrent, and thereby both arrest the enemy's progress in that quarter, and maintain a position from which either the projected lateral movement upon Lintz or the ultimate retreat upon Vienna might be effected. Like all the other streams

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which, in the lower parts of Lombardy, descend from the summits of the Alps to the Italian plains, this river flows in the middle of an immense gravelly bed, elevated for the most part above the adjoining meadow, and fordable in all parts except after heavy rains. At that season, however, the melting of the snows in the higher Alps rendered the torrent swollen, and made any attempt to cross a hazardous operation. But finding that the spirits of his troops had been most powerfully elevated by the triumphs of the Grand Army, Eugene resolved to attempt the passage by main force ; and hoped, by rivaling the brilliant exploit of Napoleon at the passage of the Tagliamento,* to wipe out the disgrace of his defeat at Sacile. The attempt was made on the 8th May at two points, viz., the fords of Toreillo and St Nicholas, distant two miles from each other, in front of Lovadina. Dessaix, with six battalions, crossed at the first of these points at daybreak ; but he had no sooner drawn up his troops in square, on the opposite bank, than they were charged with great vigour by three thousand Austrian horse. The Imperial cavalry, notwithstanding the most gallant exertions, were unable to break that solid mass of infantry. Had a body of foot-soldiers been at hand to support their attacks, or cannon to break the firm array of the enemy, without doubt their efforts would have proved successful ; but the infantry, considerably behind, could not get up in time ; and meanwhile Eugene succeeded in bringing up a large body of French horse, which quickly passed over, and, by charging the Imperial cavalry in their turn, relieved the grenadiers, now almost sinking under the fatigues of the continued combat, from the weight which had oppressed them.¹

¹Erz.Johan.
Feldz. 1809,
99, 104. Pel.
iii. 196, 201.
Jom. iii.
225, 226.

Wolfskehl however, who commanded the Austrian dragoons, turned fiercely on these new assailants. The Imperial horsemen, the flower of their army, fought bravely : a terrible combat ensued, in which their gallant

25.
Defeat of
the Aus-
trians.

* *Ante*, Chap. XXIII. § 10.

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commander was slain; and it was not till half their number was stretched on the plain, and an overwhelming superiority of force had rendered further resistance unavailing, that these intrepid cavaliers fell back upon their infantry, who were slowly advancing to the charge. The foot-soldiers were ridden over and thrown into confusion by the flying dragoons: disorder speedily spread in the columns; several cannon and large quantities of baggage were taken; and it was only by bringing up in person the reserve of grenadiers that the Archduke succeeded in arresting the rout. Meanwhile, as the waters of the Piave still continued to rise from the melting of the snows in the mountains, Eugene hastily constructed a bridge of boats, by means of which Macdonald's division was crossed over, which was soon followed by that of Grenier, and the rest of the army; Dessaix, with his unconquerable squares, still keeping his ground in front, and covering the deploying of the columns to the right and left. At two in the afternoon, Eugene having collected thirty thousand foot and six thousand horse on the left bank, marched forward to attack the enemy; but the Archduke was already in full retreat by the great road of Cornegliano, which was effected in excellent order, though not without much bloody fighting; the numerous canals, dykes, and hollow ways of the country affording every facility for arresting the progress of the enemy. In this disastrous affair, in which the Austrian commanders vainly attempted to defend seven leagues of a fordable river, and uselessly sacrificed their noble cavalry by bringing it into action against infantry without the aid either of foot or cannon, the Archduke John lost nearly six thousand men, fifteen guns, and thirty caissons, while the French had not to deplore the fall of more than four thousand. But, what was far more important, he lost the whole moral influence of the victory of Sacile; and the *prestige* of success, with all its incalculable effects, had passed over to the enemy.¹

¹ Erz. Johan. Feldz. 1809, 99, 110. Pel. iii. 196, 207. Jom. iii. 225, 227. Thib. vii. 265.

After this defeat, the Archduke John retired without any further struggle, and without being disquieted in his retreat, to Villach in Carinthia. The strong forts which he had constructed at Malborghetto, Tarvis, and Prediel, on the roads to that town, and at the Prewald on that to Laibach, gave him the means of effecting this movement without any molestation. Arrived at Villach, he received intelligence of the fall of Vienna, and, at the same time, a letter from the Archduke Charles, of 15th May, directing him to move with all his forces upon Lintz.* Conceiving that these orders had now become impracticable, and that the reduction of the capital had totally extinguished the object for which they had been framed, the Archduke unfortunately thought that he must act for himself, and take counsel from the disastrous circumstances in which the monarchy was placed. Impressed with these ideas, instead of turning his face towards Lintz, he directed his march to Gratz, on the road to Hungary, and sent orders to Jellachich—who had been detached in the first instance to the northward, towards Salzburg, to open up a communication with Hiller and the corps which might operate towards Lintz—to retreat in the same direction, by following the romantic defiles of the Muhr. There he arrived on the 24th, without any further engagement, and descended into the plains of Hungary, having abandoned the Tyrol, with its heroic defenders, the forts on the crests of the mountains which had covered his own retreat, with their gallant garrisons, and the whole projected operations on the Upper Danube, to their fate.¹

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26.
Retreat of
the Aus-
trians from
Italy into
Hungary.
May 17.

¹ Pel. iii.
214, 223.
Jom. iii.
227, 229.
Erz. Johan.
Feldz. 124.
135.

* The orders, dated Enzersdorf, 15th May 1809, were quite precise:—"To march from Villach by Spital and Salzburg, on the Danube; to summon to his aid the corps of Jellachich, to co-operate with Kollowrath, who at the same period was to be before Lintz, on the left bank of the river, and to act in unison on the rear and communications of Napoleon, now master of Vienna." It was eight days' march from Laibach to Lintz; Prince John, therefore, might have been there by the 24th or 25th, where no one remained but Bernadotte with the Saxons. Of what incalculable importance would such a concentration of 50,000 men have been on the direct line of Napoleon's communications immediately after his defeat at Aspern, which took place on the 22d!—See PELET, ii. 221, 222.

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27.

Capture of
the moun-
tain forts
of Carinthia
and Styria
by the
French.
May 14.

The French advanced guard crossed the frontier of the Austrian States on the 14th, at Ponteba, and speedily, in great strength, surrounded the fort of Malborghetto. When summoned to surrender, the commander replied, "that his orders were to defend himself, and not to negotiate;" and the intrepidity of the defence corresponded with such an announcement. The works consisted of a rampart of wood surmounting a ditch, and enclosing a wooden tower three stories high, which were filled with musketeers; and, as the assailants had only been able to bring up guns of a light calibre, they presented, when defended by brave men, very formidable obstacles. By climbing, however, to the summit of the cliffs by which they were overhung, at the same time that several regiments assailed them on the lower side, the besiegers succeeded in entirely surrounding the enemy, and exposing them to a plunging fire, to which they could make no adequate reply, from the heads only of their adversaries being seen behind the rocks. Still, however, the brave Imperialists refused to surrender: their heroic commander, Henzel, fell desperately wounded while exclaiming, "Courage, my comrades!" Rauch, who succeeded him in the command, defended himself like a lion. But nothing could in the end withstand the impetuosity of the French. Irritated by the prolonged resistance and firm countenance of the enemy, they rushed headlong against the rampart, and, crowding upon each other's shoulders, and mounting on the dead bodies which encumbered the ditch, at length succeeded in forcing their way in at the embrasures. Still the central tower, from its three stages, vomited forth a furious and incessant fire: but the external rampart being carried, its gates were at last forced; and it was only by the noble efforts of Eugene and his officers, who were penetrated with admiration at the heroic defence of their antagonists, that the lives of the few survivors of this desperate conflict were spared.¹

¹ Pel. iii.
224, 230.
Erz. Johan.
Feldz. 104,
111. Jom.
iii. 228.

This brilliant success proved decisive of the fate of all these mountain fortifications. The Col di Tarvis, already the theatre of glorious strife in 1797, was defended by a long rampart running the whole way across the summit of the pass, from the mountain of Flitschel to that of Burqueburg, strengthened by sixteen redoubts. It was attacked at the same time as Malborghetto, and Giulay successfully defended himself for two days against very superior forces. But the fall of the forts enabled the enemy to turn this strong line, and take the defenders in rear, which Eugene was already preparing to do ; so that the Archduke, on the 16th, sent orders to Giulay to evacuate his post, and effect his retreat in the night down the valley of the Save. This order was promptly obeyed ; but at daylight the French discovered the evacuation, and pressed on in pursuit. They overtook the retiring Austrians in front of Weissenfels, and put them to the rout, taking eighteen guns and two thousand prisoners. Another mountain fort, on the Prediel, blocked up the road from Görizia to Tarvis, and so arrested the march of Serras with the centre of the French army. Its garrison was only three hundred men, with eight pieces of cannon ; but they were commanded by a hero, Hermann, who had inspired his handful of followers with the resolution of the defenders of Thermopylæ. When summoned to surrender, and informed of the retreat of the Archduke, and the fall of Malborghetto, he replied, nothing daunted, that “ he was resolved to lay down his life for his country.”¹

Nor did his defence derogate from these heroic sentiments. Though assailed by forces twenty times as numerous as his own, he persevered in the most desperate resistance, made good the external rampart as long as a man was left upon it who could hold a bayonet ; and, when its defenders were all maimed or slain, fell back alone to the blockhouse in the centre ; and, when it was set on fire, sallied forth at the head of a band of devoted

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28.

Assault of
the Col di
Tarvis and
other forts.

May 16.

May 16.

May 17.

May 17.

¹ Pel. iii.

236, 239.

Erz. Johan.
Feldz, 120,
124.

29.

Noble de-
fence of
Hermann,
and progress
of Macedon-
ald.

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May 14.

followers, and fell gloriously, pierced with innumerable wounds.* Macdonald, who with the right wing was to advance, further to the south, across the Isonzo and the mountains of Prewald, encountered a less serious opposition. On the night of the 14th he effected the passage of the swollen torrent of the Isonzo near Görizia, and at that place made himself master of the battering-train destined for the siege of Palma-Nuova. Two thousand men were stationed in the forts of the Prewald, constructed on the same plan as those of Malborghetto, and, like them, commanding entirely the summit of the pass. Several assaults were in the first instance repulsed by the garrison; but when the besiegers' artillery was brought up, and the occupation of the adjacent heights exposed them without resource to a plunging fire, against which their fortifications were no protection, they deemed further resistance useless, and capitulated with the whole artillery at their disposal, consisting of fifteen pieces.¹

May 21.
¹ Erz. Johan.
Feldz. 120,
124. Pel.iii.
236, 239.

30.
Fall of
Trieste,
Laibach,
and the
whole fron-
tier defences
of Austria.
May 22.

Meanwhile Trieste, which was unarmed, and incapable of resistance, fell an easy prey to General Schilt, with the light troops of Macdonald's division; and the artillery taken at Görizia and the Prewald was forthwith forwarded to that important seaport, to place it in a posture of defence against the English cruisers who were then blockading some Russian ships of war. Rapidly following up his advantages, Macdonald, immediately after making himself master of the Prewald, turned towards Laibach, where an intrenched camp, armed with fifty pieces of cannon, commanding the approach to the capital of Carniola, was garrisoned by five thousand landwehr. Joining

* The Archduke John was so impressed with the gallantry of the Austrian commander on this occasion that he wrote a letter to Hermann's father, consoling him as he best could for the loss of so heroic a son.—ERZ. JOHANN'S *Feldzug*, 129.

“Mostra ei la faccia intrepida e sicura,
E pugna pur fra gli avversari avvolto,
Più che morir, temendo esser rispinto;
E vuol morendo anco parer non vinto.”

Tasso, *Ger. Lib.* xix. 1.

conduct to vigour, the French general, at the same time that he approached the intrenchments with the bulk of his forces in front, detached Broussier with two brigades, which threatened to cut off their line of retreat towards Croatia ; while several squadrons on the left bank of the Save made preparations for crossing that river, and assailing them on the other side. Alarmed at the simultaneous appearance of the enemy's forces in so many different quarters, and deeming further resistance useless, now that Vienna had surrendered, the commander of the intrenched camp laid down his arms, with nearly five thousand militia, and sixty pieces of cannon. This important success insured the submission of all Carniola, and left Macdonald at liberty to follow the forward movement of the Viceroy towards Vienna ; while the occupation of Trieste, and the passes leading to it, opened up a communication with Marmont in Dalmatia, who was already preparing to effect his junction with the Grand Army, and concur in its operations. By these successes the whole frontier fortifications of the Hereditary States were forced, with the loss to the Austrians of ten thousand men, and ninety pieces of cannon ; but they were dearly purchased, for at Malborghetto, Tarvis, and Prediel, nearly half that number of French had fallen.¹

These disasters, however, considerable as they proved, were not the only, nor the greatest, which befell the retreating army. Jellachich, who had advanced towards Salzburg, in order to prepare the way for the prescribed lateral movement of the Archduke John towards Lintz, having received counter orders from that prince to descend by the valley of the Muhr towards Gratz, in order to form a junction with the bulk of the Italian army, encountered, at the bridge of St Michael, Serras with his powerful division, who, after forcing the valley of the Prediel, was descending the narrow defiles of the Muhr, on the road to Leoben. The Austrian general was following the lateral vale of Lessing, which unites at right

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¹ Erz. Johan.
Feldz. 120,
129. Pel. iii.
236, 243.
Jom. iii.
227, 229.

31.
Total defeat
of Jellachich
in the valley
of the Muhr.
May 24.

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angles with that of the Muhr at St Michael; and the two divisions came suddenly and unexpectedly in contact at that romantic pass. The Imperialists at first made a vigorous resistance, and Jellachich, arranging his troops on the road at the foot of the rocks on each side of the bridge, kept up so heavy a fire that, for two hours, all the French columns which presented themselves were swept away. Attracted to the front by the cannonade, the Viceroy came up, and immediately detached several battalions on the road to Mautern, on the other side of the Muhr, who speedily scaled the mountains in the rear of the Imperialists, and commenced a plunging fire upon them from behind. Panic-struck by this unexpected apparition, which they conceived was a second army come to complete their destruction, the Austrians broke and fled—some by the road of St Michael, where they were pursued without mercy, and for the most part either cut down or made prisoners; some by the valley of Lessing, where they fell into the hands of a French brigade, under General Valentin. Nearly two thousand Imperialists were killed or wounded, and above three thousand made prisoners, in this disastrous affair: and such was the terror now inspired by the French armies, and such the depression arising from the fall of the capital, and their multiplied defeats, that on the road from Salzburg to Leoben, four hundred recruits, and twice that number of militia, laid down their arms to a captain followed by a single dragoon.¹

¹ Pel. iii.
242, 245.
Erz. Johan.
129, 135.

32.
Eugene advances to Vienna, and joins Napoleon.
May 26.
May 27.

Jellachich, having lost all his baggage and cannon, with difficulty escaped at the head of two thousand men, by cross mountain-paths, to Gratz, where his arrival, and the woful condition of his troops, excited such consternation that the Archduke forthwith set out in the direction of Komorn in Hungary, abandoning all attempt to bar access to the capital to the invader. Relieved by this retreat from all further molestation in his advance, Eugene moved on rapidly, in the footsteps trod twelve

years before by Napoleon, to Judenbourg and Leoben ; and next day, amidst shouts of joy from both armies, his advanced posts fell in with the patrols of Lauriston, who belonged to the Grand Army, on the Simmering, and on the day following the junction of the two armies was fully effected ; while the army of the Archduke John, driven to a circuitous and eccentric retreat into Hungary, was entirely lost for the present to the monarchy.¹

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1 Pel. iii.
242, 247.
Erz. Johan.
Feld. 129,
137. Jom.
iii. 229, 230.
Thib. vii.
266, 267.

The eyes of all Europe were now fixed with absorbing interest on the shores of the Danube, near Vienna, where a hundred thousand men on either shore stood prepared for mortal, and to all appearance decisive conflict. Defeat to either party seemed fraught with irreparable ruin ; for while the Austrians had no other army or reserves to fall back upon if the Archduke's army were defeated in the heart of the monarchy, the French, on their side, had a disastrous retreat to the Rhine to anticipate, if their arms should prove unsuccessful. Prussia and the north of Germany, it was well known, would start up the moment that a serious reverse befell their eagles ; and though the contest took place under the walls of the Austrian capital, it was in reality one of life and death for the French empire. Nor were the chances so unequal as might at first sight appear ; for though the Austrian armies had been driven back, separated from each other, and repeatedly defeated, yet their physical strength was not reduced in a much greater proportion than that of their antagonists ; and though their capital was taken, still this had been accomplished only by a bold irruption, which exposed the invader to nearly the same peril as the invaded. Every one felt, what Napoleon at the time admitted to be true, that a single defeat on the Danube would soon bring the Imperialists to the Rhine ;* and though the Archduke Charles could not lay claim to the transcen-

33.

Chances of
the conflict
under the
walls of
Vienna to
either party.

* In the council of war held after the battle of Aspern, when some voices had been expressed for retreating, Napoleon said—"If we retreat, we shall admit in the face of all Europe that we have been defeated. Where shall we retire to?—the Traun, the Inn, or the Lech? No! *we must fly at once*

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¹ Pel. iii.
250. Stat.
160, 162.34.
Napoleon
resolves to
cross the
Danube,
and attack
the enemy.

dent military talents of his opponent, yet he was second to none of the other generals of Europe in scientific ability. And it was no small military skill which, after so desperate a shock on the plains of Bavaria, could still array a hundred thousand undiscouraged warriors for the defence of their country, on the banks of the Danube.¹

During the week which immediately followed the occupation of Vienna, the Emperor, being well aware of the crisis which had arrived, was indefatigable in his efforts to station his troops in such a manner in echelon, along his line of communication, as to secure his rear from insult; while, at the same time, innumerable despatches in every direction provided for the supplies of the army. Titles, decorations, ribbons, crosses of honour, and pensions, were liberally distributed among the soldiers; splendid reviews reanimated the spirits of the men, which the fatigues of the campaign had somewhat depressed, while confident announcements in the bulletins predicted the speedy destruction of the Austrian monarchy. He had now assembled round Vienna the whole corps of Massena and Lannes, the Imperial Guard and reserve cavalry under Bessières; and though their strength had been much diminished by the losses of the campaign, they could still, after deducting the sick and wounded, bring above eighty thousand veteran troops into the field. Davoust at St Polten, and Vandamme at Lintz, Ebersberg, and Enns, where he was to be relieved by the Saxons under Bernadotte, who were coming up from Passau, kept up his communications, while the Viceroy was daily expected with forty thousand men from Italy. Supported by the battlements of Vienna, such a force was beyond the reach of attack from any force the Imperialists could bring against them;² but it was neither consistent with the Emperor's principles of war nor political policy to

² Jom. iii.
189, 190.
Pel. iii. 251,
255, 259.
Thib. vii.
277.

to the Rhine; for the allies whom victory or fortune has given us will all turn against our standards the moment we acknowledge a reverse."—PELET, iii. 331.

remain shut up behind walls while the enemy kept the field, and was accumulating the forces of the monarchy around him ; and he resolved, therefore, to attempt by main force the passage of the river.

The Danube, which, till within a few leagues of Vienna, flows in a narrow channel, there swells into a wide expanse, and spreads over the plain, embracing several islands in its course. Some of these are extensive, and richly cultivated ; but the greater part are smaller, and covered with wood. The island of Prater, with its beautiful umbrageous avenues and much-loved woody recesses ; and that of Lobau, at a greater distance down the river, and varied with enclosures and cultivation, are the most considerable. The latter is two miles and a half in length, and a mile and three quarters in breadth, covered with rich meadows, swampy thickets, and verdant copse-woods ; it has been immortalised in history from the memorable events of which it soon became the theatre. By far the most favourable point for forcing a passage from the right bank is at Nussdorf, half a league above Vienna. There the principal branch of the Danube, a hundred and eighty toises in breadth, flows in a deep and impetuous channel, separated from a similar branch, fifty toises broad, by an island which would serve as an advantageous support for assembling and putting under cover the first troops employed in the operation. Another point for attempting the same enterprise was in front of Ebersdorf, across the great island of Lobau. This island is separated from the right bank by another isle about a mile in length, and half that extent in breadth ; while several smaller islets are scattered in the principal channel of the river. Thus an army attempting the passage at that point has four branches of the Danube to cross, each of which may be considered as a separate river. There is, first, the channel separating the right bank from the lesser island, which is two hundred and forty toises broad ; then the main body of the stream, flowing in a

35.
Description
of the islands
of the
Danube,
near Vienna,
and the dif-
ferent chan-
nels of the
river.

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deep current, a hundred and seventy toises in breadth, which separates it from Lobau, with a small island in its course dividing this main stream into two parts ; finally, the northern branch, which lies between the isle of Lobau and the banks of the Marchfeld on the left of the river ; it is seventy toises in breadth, and in like manner broken in its course by several smaller islands. Thus, at Ebersdorf, many more bridges required to be constructed than at Nussdorf, and a military road across the islands was necessary to connect them together. But these disadvantages were more than compensated by the diminished weight and impetuosity of the stream, in consequence of being separated into so many channels, and the solidity given to the lengthened structure, by having such considerable abutments to support it at different points.¹

¹ Personal observation. Stut. 202, 210. Pel. ii. 259, 267. Jom. iii. 192, 194.

36. Napoleon's preparations to effect the passage. Failure at Nussdorf. May 13.

After mature deliberation, Napoleon resolved to attempt the passage at the same time at both points. Lannes was charged with the undertaking at Nussdorf, Massena at Lobau. This double set of operations, it was hoped, would distract the attention of the enemy, and enable the Emperor to select, in the end, that one for the real passage where the least difficulties were to be overcome, Lannes, in the first instance, attempted to surprise the passage at Nussdorf, and pushed forward six hundred men to the island of Schwarze Lacken, which lies, as already mentioned, near the northern bank at that point ; but this advanced guard was speedily beset by superior forces, which General Hiller despatched from his side of the river, and before any fresh succours could arrive from the southern shore, vigorously assailed, and compelled to capitulate. This check, joined to the obvious difficulty of establishing such a force as could maintain itself in an island so near the north bank, and separated by so wide and impetuous a current from the southern, induced the Emperor to relinquish all serious intentions of effecting the passage there ;² and he, in consequence, bent all his

² Pel. ii. 262, 265. Jom. iii. 195. Stut. 212, 216.

attention to the island of Lobau, where Massena was charged with the enterprise.

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Indefatigable were the efforts made by all ranks, from Napoleon to the humblest soldier, for the prosecution of this great work. The inexhaustible arsenal of Vienna supplied in abundance all the stores and implements necessary for its success; and the prudent foresight of the Emperor had already provided a flotilla of boats, drawn from many different quarters, and transported by land carriage to the Danube, which were easily converted into the materials of a bridge. Five days were consumed in these preparations; on the sixth, everything being in readiness, the enterprise was commenced. So anxious was the Emperor for the success of this undertaking, that he stationed himself on the southern bank as the troops were embarking, minutely examined and assigned to each the place he was to occupy in the vessel, superintended the distribution of cartridges to the soldiers, and addressed a few words to almost every individual man. With such secrecy had Massena's preparations been conducted, in the narrow channel of the Danube near Vienna, and behind the leafy screen of the Prater, that no danger was anticipated by the Austrians in that quarter; and although the posts in the island of Lobau were daily relieved, they had not been particularly strengthened on that occasion.¹

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37.

His vigorous efforts to effect a passage at Lobau.
May 13.

Atlas,
Plate 56.

May 19.

¹ Pel. iii.
270, 273.
Stut. 222,
224.

At ten at night on the 19th, all things being in readiness, the first boats pulled off from the shore, and, steering round the intermediate islands, made straight for that of Lobau, where the Imperialists were first apprised of their approach by their keels striking on the shore. Instantly leaping into the water, the tirailleurs rushed forward into the thickets, and being constantly fed by reinforcements from the rear, soon expelled the Austrians from the isle. Masses of infantry were immediately after passed over, who soon secured the lodgment, and rendered this important post safe from attack. At the same time other detachments in like manner took possession of the inter-

38.

Passage of
the river.
May 19.

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mediate isles ; and the material points of the passage being thus secured, all hands were instantly set to the commencement of the bridges which were to connect them with the northern bank. The depth and rapidity of the current at that period, when the melting of the Alpine snows had already commenced, presented very formidable difficulties ; but all were overcome by the ardour and activity of the French engineers. Sixty-eight large boats had been collected, and nine huge rafts ; they made the bridge of the most solid materials as far as Lobau ; but from that island to the opposite shore of the Marchfeld, it was necessary to construct it of pontoons. With such vigour, however, was the enterprise conducted, that by noon on the following day the whole was completed, and the leading columns of Massena's corps instantly began to defile over in great strength to the opposite bank.¹

¹ Pel. ii.
270, 275.
Jom. iii. 196,
197. Stut.
224, 227.
Sav. iv. 68,
71, 73.

39.
Operations
of the Arch-
duke on the
Upper
Danube,
at Lintz
and Krems.
May 17.

While this important operation was in progress in the neighbourhood of Vienna, the Archduke Charles, relying on the prescribed co-operation of the Archduke John, with the army of Italy, through the Tyrolean mountains, had made a serious attack on the bridge of Lintz, in the upper part of the Danube. Kollowrath, at the head of twenty-five thousand men, there commenced an attack on the Würtembergers under Vandamme, to whom that position was intrusted. Profiting by their superiority of force, the Imperialists in the first instance obtained considerable advantages ; and that important post was on the point of falling into the hands of the enemy, when Bernadotte came up with the Saxons, nearly thirty thousand strong. The combat was no longer equal ; and Kollowrath, finding himself greatly outnumbered, and having received no advices of the approach of the Archduke John from the direction of Salzbourg, was compelled to desist from his enterprise, and sustained a loss of several hundred men and six guns in his retreat. Two days afterwards, preparations were made by the Austrians for crossing the river at Krems, which gave serious

disquiet to Napoleon, who ordered up in haste the whole corps of Davoust, which was stationed in echelon at Mölk, and along the road from thence by St Pölten to Vienna. But these demonstrations against his rear, so far from diverting the Emperor from his original design of crossing at Lobau, and giving battle to the Archduke on the northern bank, only made him the more intent upon the immediate prosecution of his enterprise, by showing that the enemy's army was, in part at least, removed from the scene of action, and bringing, at the same time, vividly before his mind the dangers of his situation, with a long line of communication beset by so many dangers in his rear, and the necessity of instantly bringing the war to a conclusion by a decisive victory under the walls of Vienna. He pressed the march of his troops across the bridge of Lobau with the utmost anxiety ; they defiled all the 20th, and the whole of the succeeding night, without intermission ; and by daybreak on the 21st, forty thousand men were already assembled in battle array on the northern side.¹

Meanwhile the Archduke Charles, with the great body of his forces, lay on the woody heights of the Bisamberg ; the fires of his bivouacs illuminated at night the whole of that quarter of the heavens ; and already, by revealing the magnitude of the enemy's force, inspired the French soldiers with gloomy presentiments as to the issue of the contest which was approaching. From this elevated position, the plain beyond Vienna towards the Simmering appeared to be enveloped in clouds of dust ; but as they at intervals cleared away, the glitter of bayonets and helmets in the sun's rays, seen even at that distance, all following one direction, indicated a grand movement towards Kaiser-Ebersdorf. In effect, having perceived from that lofty ridge, by means of telescopes, both the preparations made for crossing at Lobau, and the continued march of Davoust's corps along the southern bank of the river, from Mölk towards the capital, the Archduke

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¹ Stut. 220,
224. Pel.
ii. 268, 270.
Jom. iii. 197.
Sav. iv. 74.

40.
The Arch-
duke re-
solves to
attack the
the French
who had
crossed.

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conceived, with reason, that a favourable opportunity had now occurred of falling with his concentrated forces upon half the French army, before the remainder was crossed over, and possibly reducing it to extremities, even in sight of the other portion on the opposite bank, and while yet the columns in rear were only wending their way in toilsome march towards the capital. Impressed with these ideas, orders were sent to the advanced posts on the edge of the Marchfeld next Lobau, to fall back after a merely nominal resistance; the cavalry which had been all advanced to the edge of the river, were recalled; while the whole strength of the army was collected on the Bisamberg, concealed from the enemy, but ready to fall with its accumulated masses upon the first corps which should be transported across. At the same time instructions were sent to Kollowrath, Nordmann, and the officers in command farther up the river, to collect a quantity of boats to be laden with heavy materials and combustibles, and, when the proper season arrived, to be detached, so that they might be borne down by the force of the swollen current against the enemy's bridges. In truth, it was evident that Napoleon's overweening confidence in his good fortune had at last brought him into a situation full of danger, and that, with fatal rashness, he had exposed himself to the most perilous chance in war, that of being attacked by greatly superior forces in an open plain, with a great river traversed by a single bridge, recently constructed and liable to destruction, in his rear.¹

¹ Archduke Charles's Official Account of Aspern, Ann. Reg. 1809. Chron. 332, 333. Stut. 220, 229. Pel. ii. 275, 277.

41.
Austrian plan and order of attack. May 21.

Anxiety for the great events which were approaching caused many a noble heart to throb during the night in the Austrian host; and already, as the morning dawned, thousands of straining eyes were turned in the direction of Lobau and the Marchfeld, where, even at that early hour, a great accumulation of force was visible. The march of troops across the bridge continued incessant, and all the reports from the outposts announced that the

lines in their front were rapidly widening and extending. With exulting hearts the army received orders at sunrise to stand to arms ; the advantages of their situation were obvious even to the meanest sentinel ; the noble array which was pouring across the bridges before them, into the plains at their feet, seemed a devoted host blindly rushing upon destruction. The vast plain of the Marchfeld, stretching from the foot of the Bisamberg to the margin of the Danube, lay spread like a carpet before the front of the line, and appeared, from the absence of every obstruction, to be the destined theatre of some great event. The officers around the Archduke urged him to commence the attack early in the morning, and while as yet the whole of Massena's corps was not passed over ; but while the enemy was making a false movement was not the moment to interrupt or warn him of his danger. Instead of acceding to their suggestions, that able commander ordered the arms to be piled, and the troops to dine ; following thus the maxim of the great generals of antiquity, that, even with the bravest troops, it is of the last importance to commence a battle with the strength of the men recently recruited by food. At twelve o'clock the movement of the enemy being sufficiently pronounced, and retreat in the presence of so great a host impossible, the signal to advance was given. The men received it with loud shouts and enthusiastic acclamations ; joyful war-songs, accompanied by Turkish music, resounded through the air ; long-continued *vivats* arose on all sides, as the Archduke Charles, the saviour of Germany, rode along the lines of the second column, at whose head he had taken his station. Every breast panted with anxious desire and deserved confidence for the decisive moment, and the finest weather favoured the awful scene. The circumstances had spread a noble ardour through every heart. Their much-loved capital, the abode of their Emperor, was in sight, polluted by the eagles of the stranger ; their homes were the prize of

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¹ Archduke
Charles's
Account of
Aspern,
Ann. Reg.
1809, 382.
Chron. Stut.
230, 235.
Pel. ii. 275,
276.

victory ; before them was a splendid battle-field, where they would combat for their sovereign, their liberty, and their country, under the eyes of their wives, their parents, their children. Descending from their elevated encampment, horse, foot, and cannon rapidly and eagerly pressed forward towards the enemy ; and soon, to those who yet lingered on the Bisamberg, but a small space of clear green intervened between the volumes of dust which enveloped the extremity of the bridge of Lobau, and the moving clouds which marked the advance of the German host.¹

“Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
A dreadful interval; and front to front
Presented stood in terrible array
Of hideous length.” *

42.
Position and
dangers of
the French
army.

Midway between the villages of ASPERN and ESSLING, each situated at the distance of half a mile from the bank of the Danube, the French bridge opened upon the plain of the Marchfeld. These villages, therefore, formed the bastions on either flank of Napoleon's army, which extended in line across the open space, a mile broad, lying between them. Built of stone houses, most of them two stories in height, and surrounded by enclosures and garden walls of the same durable materials, both offered valuable *points d'appui* to the bridges, under cover of which, it was hoped, Massena and Bessières would be able to maintain themselves, till the remainder of the army could be brought over to their support. Essling had a large stone granary, three stories in height, furnished with loop-holes, capable of containing several hundred men ; while Aspern, a long straggling village, was strengthened, like Eylau, by a churchyard surrounded by a strong wall. A double line of trenches, intended to draw off the water, extended between these two natural bastions, and thence from Aspern to the Danube, and served as a wet ditch, which

* *Paradise Lost*, vi. 105.

afforded every possible security to the troops debouching from the island of Lobau. The whole ground was perfectly level, gently sloping upwards, like a vast natural glaxis, towards Raschdorf: white villages alone, bosomed in tufted trees, rising above the tender green of the plain, which was covered with rich crops at that early season, broke the uniformity of the expanse. Among them the glittering pinnacles of Breitenlee, and on the right the massy tower of Neusiedel, were conspicuous; while on the left, the woody heights of the Bisamberg shut in the scene. The widespread light of the bivouacs, along the broad expanse of the horizon, revealed the magnitude of the force to which they were opposed, and inspired an anxious disquietude through the French army.¹

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¹ Personal observation. Archduke Charles's Account, Ann. Reg. 1809, 383. Pel. ii. 283, 287.

Uneasy at the situation of the troops which had crossed over, Napoleon was on horseback by break of day, and in person rode forward to the outposts, to satisfy himself as to the amount of the enemy's force by which he was likely to be assailed. Lannes with his usual impetuosity maintained that there was nothing but a curtain of ten thousand men in front, and proposed that they should be attacked without delay; but Massena, instructed by long experience, and who had surveyed the fires of the enemy from the steeple of Aspern the preceding night, gave a decided opinion that the whole Austrian army was at hand. Napoleon saw too good reason to adhere to the latter view, and, instantly appreciating the magnitude of the danger, rode back to the bridge to hasten the passage of the troops. Orders were despatched in every direction to assemble the forces on the right bank: the corps of Lannes was already beginning to cross over; that of Davoust, which had arrived at Vienna the evening before, was ordered up with all imaginable expedition; the cuirassiers, the Guards, the reserve cavalry, the park of artillery, all received directions to hasten to the bridges.² But it was too late; their narrow breadth would only permit a very limited number of soldiers to march abreast

43.
Napoleon is surprised, but resolves to give battle. May 21.

² Nap. in Month. ii. 77. Archduke Charles's Account, Ann. Reg. 1809, 383, 384. Chron. Pel. ii. 283, 287. Stut. 240, 247. Jom. iii. 200.

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44.
Austrian
plan of at-
tack, and
forces on
both sides.

upon them; the cavalry and artillery could only be got across with considerable difficulty; and the one over the main branch of the river was so much damaged by the rise and impetuosity of the stream, that by four o'clock in the afternoon it was almost impassable. Meanwhile the Austrian army in great strength, eighty thousand strong, of whom fourteen thousand were magnificent cavalry, with two hundred and eighty-eight pieces of cannon, was already upon them.

The Imperialists advanced in five massy columns, preceded by a strong cloud of horse, which concealed their direction and probable points of attack from the enemy. The first, under Hiller, next the Danube, moved by the meadows on the northern bank of that river direct upon Aspern; the second, under Bellegarde, with the generalissimo by his side, advanced by Leopoldau, and also directed its steps towards the same village; the third, led by Hohenzollern, moved by Breitenlee also upon Aspern; the fourth, commanded by Rosenberg, was to advance by Raschdorf towards Essling; the fifth, also directed by Rosenberg, was to turn the right flank of the enemy by Enzersdorf and co-operate in the attack upon Essling; the cavalry, all massed together, was to move over the open country between Raschdorf and Breitenlee, so as to assist the head of any column which might find itself assailed by the enemy's horse. No less than eleven of the Austrian batteries were of position, which, as they drew near to the enemy's lines, sent a destructive storm of round-shot through their ranks. The French were far from having an equal force at their disposal, and they were particularly inferior in the number and weight of their artillery; but by two o'clock in the afternoon, when the opposing hosts came into collision, seven divisions* of native troops, besides the guards of Würtemberg, Hesse-Darmstadt, and

* Viz. those of Molitor, le Grand, Boudet, Ferrand, Nansouty, d'Espagne, and Lasalle. The first four were infantry, the last cavalry of the reserve and cuirassiers. Their united strength, with the German auxiliaries, must have been at least fifty thousand men, as Molitor's and Boudet's were twelve thou-

Baden, in all, fifty thousand men, were in line; and from the known character of the soldiers, as well as the firmness of their leaders, a desperate resistance was to be anticipated. Massena, with two strong divisions, was posted round Aspern; Lannes, with a third, was in Essling; the intermediate space was occupied by the remainder of Massena's corps, the Imperial Guard, and German auxiliaries, with the formidable cuirassiers of Bessières glittering in their front.¹

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¹ Ann. Reg.
1809, 384;
385. Fel. ii.
291, 295.
Stut. 231,
235. Jom.
iii. 208.

Aspern, into which Massena had not had time to throw an adequate garrison, was in the first instance carried by the advanced guard of Hiller under Giulay. But the French marshal having quickly attacked it with the whole division of Molitor, it was not only retaken, but the Imperialists pursued to a considerable distance to the northward. Ere long, however, the broad and deep columns of Hiller, Bellegarde, and Hohenzollern, advancing to their support, warned the skilful French commander of the necessity of withdrawing all his troops to the defence of the village itself. The prospect which now presented itself was capable of daunting the most intrepid hearts. On the left, three broad and deep columns were seen converging towards Aspern; at a greater distance on the right, vast clouds of dust announced that other masses were threatening Essling; while along the whole front a formidable array of artillery, vomiting forth fire and smoke, steadily approached, rendering more awful the scene by the obscurity in which it involved all behind it. But this suspense was of short duration, and in a few minutes the Austrian battalions of Hiller, with loud shouts, advanced to the attack. If, however, the assault was impetuous, the defence was not less heroic; and never had the experienced skill and invincible tenacity of Marshal Massena been more conspicuously displayed.

45.
Desperate
conflict at
Aspern.

sand each. The French, however, assert that they had only thirty thousand native troops in action on the first day.—See ARCHDUKE CHARLES'S *Official Account of the Battle of Aspern*, Ann. Reg. 384; App. to Chron. 384; and PELET, ii. 287.

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¹ Stut. 230,
235. Pelet,
ii. 295, 297.
Jom. ii. 201.

Stationed in the cemetery of Aspern, under the boughs of the great trees which overshadow the church, he calmly awaited the result, directing the movements of his troops, and giving his orders to support the points which most required it, with the coolness and precision of veteran courage; while the crash of the boughs above his head, and the incessant clatter of grape-shot on the steeple, told how near the enemy's batteries had approached.¹

46.
Which is
at length
carried by
the Aus-
trians.

Both parties were aware that the fate of the day mainly depended on the possession of this important point, and incredible efforts were made on either side to attain it. For several hours the murderous conflict continued; fresh troops were brought up on both sides to supply the place of those who had fallen, or were exhausted in the strife: the Austrian infantry, the Hungarian grenadiers, the volunteers of Vienna, rivalled each other in courage and perseverance in the assault, while the different divisions of Massena's corps in succession nobly sustained the defence. Every street, every house, every garden of the village, became the theatre of mortal combat: the shouts of transient success, the cries of despair, were heard alternately from both parties; an incessant shower of bombs and cannon-balls from the concentric batteries of the Imperialists spread death on all sides, alike among friend and foe; while great part of the village took fire, and the flames of the burning houses afforded, as night approached, a ghastly light wherewith to continue the work of destruction, and illuminated the whole field of battle. A desperate conflict at the same time was going on in the marshy plain between Aspern and the river, where the wet ditches leading to the Danube athwart their front, and the thickets of alder-bushes, gave the French the advantage of a natural fortification. For long the superior numbers of the Austrians impeded each other, as the position of the French centre prevented them from attacking the village on more

sides than one; but at length, at eleven at night, their line having gained ground in that quarter, a combined attack was made by Hiller in front, and Vacquant, commanding part of Bellegarde's corps, which had just repulsed a formidable charge of cavalry, in flank. In spite of the most heroic efforts on the part of Massena, Molitor, and his officers, the village was carried amidst deafening shouts, which were distinctly heard above the roar of the artillery along the whole line. The French marshal made a gallant effort to regain his ground, and succeeded, with le Grand's division, which had taken the place of Molitor's in this tremendous strife, in wresting some of the houses from the enemy: but the churchyard, and the greater part of the blood-stained village, remained through the night in the hands of the Imperialists.¹

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¹ Archduke Charles's Account, Ann. Reg. 1809, 385, 386. Stut. 230, 239. Pel. ii. 295, 305. Jom. iii. 201, 202.

While this tremendous struggle was going on in Aspern, the central space between it and Essling was almost denuded of infantry: the numerous and formidable Austrian batteries in that quarter being chiefly guarded by cavalry, with Hohenzollern's infantry in their rear; while the splendid horsemen of the French Guard concealed on the opposite side the weakness of their infantry in the centre of the line. So severely, however, were his troops in both villages, and even those of the most distant reserves, galled by the sustained and incessant discharge of the tremendous array of guns, that Napoleon ordered a grand charge of cavalry in his centre to wrest them from the enemy. Bessières first sent forward the light horse of the Guard: they made repeated charges, but were unable to withstand the terrible storm of grape which was vomited forth by the Austrian batteries. Upon their repulse the French marshal ordered the cuirassiers of the Guard to charge. These gallant horsemen, cased in shining armour, whose weight the English afterwards felt so severely at Waterloo, advanced at the gallop, shaking their sabres above their heads, and making the air resound with cries of *Vive l'Empereur!*

47.
Grand charge of the French cavalry in the centre.

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So swift was the onset, so vehement the attack, that the Imperialists, who saw at once the danger of the artillery, had barely time to withdraw the guns, and throw the foot-soldiers in their rear into squares, when the tempest was upon them. In vain, however, Bessières, d'Espagne, and Lasalle, at the head of these indomitable cavaliers, swept round the now insulated foot, routed the Austrian cavalry of the reserve under Lichtenstein, which was brought up to oppose them, and, enveloping the infantry formed in squares of battalions on all sides, summoned them in the pride of irresistible strength to surrender. Cut off from all other support, the brave Hungarians stood firm back to back in their squares, and kept up so vigorous and so sustained a fire on all sides, that after having half their numbers, including the gallant d'Espagne, stretched on the plain, the French cuirassiers were obliged, shattered and defeated, to retire to their own lines, and both parties at this point slept upon the field of battle.¹

¹ Pel. ii.
298, 302.
Archduke
Charles's
Account,
Ann. Reg.
1809, 387.
Jom. iii.
20.

48.
Bloody
attack on
Essling,
which
proves un-
successful.

Rosenberg's columns followed the course prescribed to them ; but, as the fifth corps, which was to make the circuit towards Enzersdorf, and attack Essling on the extreme flank, necessarily required more time for its movement than the fourth, which advanced direct by Raschdorf upon the same point, the latter retarded their march, and the combined attack did not take place till five in the afternoon. Enzersdorf was evacuated by the enemy upon the approach of the Imperialists ; and Lannes, at the head only of a single division, was threatened with an attack by forces more than double his own, both in front and flank. The fourth column, which attacked the village on the western side, was vigorously charged in flank in its advance by a large body of French horse, detached by Bessières from the centre of the line ; and the necessity of forming squares, to resist these attacks, retarded considerably the assault on that side. At length, however, the unsuccessful charge on

the Austrian central batteries having thrown back the French cuirassiers in that quarter, and the reserve dragoons of Lichtenstein having been re-formed, and brought up in great strength to the support of the centre, the Archduke ordered a general advance of the whole line, at the same time that a combined attack of Rosenberg's two columns, now perfectly able to co-operate, was made on Essling. In spite of the utmost efforts of Napoleon, the centre of the Austrians sensibly gained ground, and it was only by the most devoted gallantry on the part of the French cuirassiers, who again and again, though with diminished numbers, renewed the combat, that he was able to prevent that part of his line from being entirely broken through. The violence of the flanking fire of grape and musketry, however, which issued from Essling, was such as to arrest the Imperialists when they came abreast of that village; and, although many assaults were made upon it by Rosenberg's columns, and it was repeatedly set on fire by the Austrian shells, yet, such was the intrepid resistance of Lannes, with his heroic division, who defended with invincible obstinacy every house and every garden, that all the assailants could do was to drive them entirely within its walls. When darkness suspended the combat, it was still in the hands of the French.¹

The night which followed this desperate conflict was spent with very different feelings in the two armies. On both sides, indeed, the most strenuous efforts were made to repair the losses which had been sustained, and prepare for the conflict on the morrow; but it was with very opposite emotions that the soldiers' breasts were agitated in the two hosts. On the side of the French, to the proud confidence of victory had succeeded the chill of disappointment, the anticipation of disaster. The wonted shouts of the men were no longer heard; a dark feeling of anxiety oppressed every breast; the brilliant meteor of the empire seemed about to be extin-

CHAP.
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¹ Stut.
239, 250.
Archduke
Charles's
Account,
Ann. Reg.
1809, 388,
389. Pel.
ii. 296, 299.
Jom. iii.
202.

49.
Feelings
with which
both parties
passed the
night on the
field of bat-
tle.

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guished in blood. They could not conceal from themselves that they had been worsted in the preceding day's fight. Aspern was lost; Essling was surrounded; the line in the centre had been forced back; the enemy slept among the dead bodies of the French; while the multitude of slain, even in the farthest reserves of their own lines, showed how completely the enemy's batteries had reached every part of their position. The Austrians, on the other hand, were justly elated by their unwonted and glorious success. For the first time, Napoleon had sustained an undoubted defeat in the field; his best troops had been baffled in a pitched battle; his position was critical beyond example, and the well-known hazard of the bridges diffused the hope that, on the morrow, a decisive victory would rescue their country from the oppressor, and at one blow work out the deliverance of Germany.¹

¹ Pel. ii. 305, 307. Sav. iv. 75, 76. Ann. Reg. 1809, 389.

50.
Heroic constancy of the French.

But though anxiety chilled the hopes, it no ways daunted the courage of the French. Stretched amidst the dead bodies of their comrades, they sternly resolved to combat to the last man on the morrow, for their beloved Emperor and the glory of their country. Sleep, induced by extraordinary fatigue, soon closed the eyes of the soldiers; the sentinels of either host were within a few yards of each other; Napoleon lay down in his cloak on the sand of the Danube, within half a mile of the Austrian batteries. But no rest was taken by the chiefs of either army; both made the most strenuous efforts to improve their chances of success for the following day. During the night, or early in the morning, the infantry of the Imperial Guard, the remainder of the corps of Lannes, and the troops of Oudinot, were with much difficulty got across the bridges, so as to give Napoleon, even after all the losses of the preceding day, fully seventy thousand men in line;^{2*} while Davoust, with thirty thousand more,

² Archduke Charles, Ann. Reg. 1809, 389. Pel. ii. 308, 309. Sav. iv. 75, 76.

* These numbers are ascertained in an authentic manner. Napoleon admits that "the French army on the second day, on the two banks of the Danube,

was just commencing the passage of the bridges. The Archduke, on his side, brought up the reserve, consisting of the grenadier corps of the Prince of Reuss, from the Bisamberg to Breitenlee, a mile in the rear of the field of battle. "Ejus prælii eventus utrumque ducem, diversis animi motibus, ad maturandum summæ rei discrimen erexit. Civilis instare fortunæ; Cerialis abolere ignominiam. Germani prosperis feroces; Romanos pudor excitaverat." 1*

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¹ Tacit. Hist.
v. 15.

Short as the night was at that season on the banks of the Danube, that period of rest was not allowed to the wearied soldiers. Long before sunrise, the moment that the first gray of the summer's dawn shed a doubtful light over the field of battle, the Austrian columns of Rosenberg again assailed Essling in front and flank; and Massena, with strong reinforcements, renewed his attacks on the churchyard of Aspern. Both assaults proved successful. Essling for the first time was carried by the Archduke's regiment of grenadiers in the early twilight; and the Imperialists, following up their success, forced the French lines on their left back towards the Danube, and straitened them considerably in that quarter. But this important success was counterbalanced by the loss of Aspern, which at the same moment was taken, with the battalion in the churchyard, and four pieces of cannon, by the French division of Cara St-Cyr. Both parties made the utmost efforts to retrieve these momentous losses.² St Hilaire came up with his division of Lannes' corps to the assistance of that gallant marshal, who was now driven out of all parts of Essling except the great

51.
Renewal of
the action
on the 22d.
Aspern and
Essling are
again obsti-
nately dis-
puted.

Atlas,
Plate 57.

² Archduke
Charles's
Official Ac-
count, Ann.
Reg. 1809.
339, 390.
Stat. 250,
255. Pel.
ii. 310.

was 20,000 *men superior to that of the Archduke, who had 100,000 men in the field.* Davoust's corps was, at the utmost, not above 40,000 men after the losses it had undergone: at this rate, therefore, the French army, which was all across excepting that marshal's corps, would have been 80,000; and, deducting 10,000 for the losses of the preceding day, 70,000 must have remained on the field on the 22d.—See NAPOLEON in MONTHOLON, ii. 78.

* "The result of this day's action stimulated both generals, from different motives, to hasten the final issue of the struggle. Civilis, to follow up his good fortune; Cerialis, to wipe out his disgrace. The Germans elated by their success, the Romans roused by shame."—TACITUS, *History*, v. 15.

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granary, and by a sudden effort expelled the Austrians, who were never able again to recover their footing in that important village till the very conclusion of the battle, though the most desperate conflict, both of foot and horse, went on the whole day in its immediate neighbourhood.

52.
Aspern is
finally car-
ried by the
Austrians.

The regiment of Klebeck rushed, about the same time, with fixed bayonets into the burning ruins of Aspern ; the French under Cara St-Cyr were expelled by the violence of the shock ; but they returned to the charge, reinforced by several battalions of the Imperial Guard, and after a struggle of an hour's duration, again drove out the Imperialists, and got possession of the churchyard, which by this time was literally covered with the dead. Hiller, however, was not to be outdone in this tremendous struggle. Again forming a column of attack, in conjunction with part of Bellegarde's corps, he himself led on the charge at the head of the regiment Benjofsky. Trampling under foot the dead and the dying, these heroic assailants advanced through burning houses, and a storm of shot, and by great exertions succeeded in driving the French entirely out of the village. The Austrian commander instantly ordered the pioneers to pull down the walls of the churchyard, and burn the church and parsonage-house, so as to prevent these important points being again rendered a shelter to the enemy. Some additional regiments were soon after brought up under General Bianchi, which enabled the Imperialists not only to maintain themselves till the close of the battle in this obstinately contested village, but to advance in the evening somewhat beyond its limits, and direct the fire of their artillery upon the flank of the French lines, drawn up between it and Essling, which played till nightfall with tremendous effect upon the dense masses, who were there accumulated within a space of little more than a mile in extent.¹

¹Archduke's
Account,
Ann. Reg.
1809, 390,
391. Chron.
Stut. 250,
261. Jom.
iii. 203, 204.
Pel. ii. 310,
311. Nap.
in Month.
ii. 78, 79.

These bloody contests in the villages were not such as

by any means suited the ardent and impetuous mind of Napoleon. Relieved from the necessity of remaining on the defensive, by the important accessions of force which he had obtained during the night, he was preparing a grand attack in the centre. For this purpose, instructions were sent to Massena, who had not yet been expelled from Aspern, to maintain himself in that village; Davoust was to debouch from the bridges, in the direction of Essling; while Oudinot and Lannes, supported by the infantry and cavalry of the Guard, were to make a united attack on the Archduke's centre, which it was hoped might be thus driven back, and entirely separated from the wings engaged in the combats round the villages. From his station behind the centre of the French line, Napoleon, at seven in the morning, pointed out with his finger to Lannes, who was on horseback beside him, the direction which his corps should follow in their advance, which was where the Austrian line appeared weakest, between the left of Hohenzollern and the right of Rosenberg. The Emperor soon after rode through the lines of the troops who were to advance, and was received with enthusiastic shouts of *Vive l'Empereur!* Attracted by the sound, the enemy's cannon directed their fire in that direction, though the fog which still lingered on the banks of the Danube concealed him from their sight, and General Monthion was killed by his side.¹

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53.

Napoleon
makes a
grand at-
tack on the
Austrian
centre.

¹ Sav. iv. 74,
75. Pel. ii.
310, 311,
312. Jom.
iii. 204.
Stut. 249,
252.

Instantly the necessary orders were given, and in a few minutes the whole of Lannes' corps were thrown into echelon, and advanced at a rapid pace, the right in front, the cavalry in reserve, immediately behind the infantry; while two hundred pieces of cannon, arrayed in the front of the whole line, distracted the attention of the enemy by a fire of unprecedented severity. As soon as Lannes, on the right, had made some progress, the remainder of the French centre, to the left, also advanced: Oudinot's troops formed the first columns, with the cuirassiers immediately behind them, and the Imperial Guard in

54.

Which is at
first success-
ful.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Pel. ii.
310, 316.
Jom. iii.
204. Stut.
241, 250.
Archduke
Charles's
Account of
Aspern,
Ann. Reg.
1809, 391,
392. App.
to Chron.
Sav. iv. 75.
Nap. in
Month. ii.
78, 80.

reserve ; so that the whole French line between Essling and Aspern moved forward in echelon, the right in front, and preceded by a tremendous array of artillery. The shock was irresistible : the heads of Lannes' columns, skilfully directed against the weakest part of the Austrian line, soon forced their way through, and threw some battalions into disorder ; into the opening thus formed the cavalry rushed with appalling fury, and soon a huge gap appeared between Rosenberg and Hohenzollern, and the foremost of the squadrons penetrated even to Breitenlee, where the Austrian reserve of the Prince of Reuss was stationed, while the fugitives from the broken battalions spread in all directions the report that the battle was lost.¹

55.
Desperate
resistance of
the Austrian
centre.

The Archduke now felt that the decisive moment had arrived : the battle, the monarchy were at stake. In this extremity, that gallant prince displayed alike the skill of a consummate commander and the heroism of a common soldier. The reserve grenadiers under the Prince of Reuss were hastily thrown into square, and brought up to the menaced point ; the numerous dragoons of Prince Lichtenstein advanced immediately behind them ; and the Archduke himself, seizing the standard of Zach's corps, which had begun to give way, addressed a few energetic words to the men, and led them back against the enemy. The generals around him emulated the noble example ; but many of them were killed or wounded at this dreadful moment. General Colloredo received a ball in the head, close by the Archduke's side, and the diminished numbers of his personal staff showed how desperate was the strife in which the generalissimo was engaged. But these heroic efforts restored the battle. Reanimated by the heart-stirring example of their chiefs, the soldiers stood their ground ; the dreadful column of Lannes was arrested in its advance, and the squares among which it had penetrated, pouring in destructive volleys on all sides, soon occasioned hesitation and anxiety in the dense array.

The Austrian batteries, playing at half musket-shot, occasioned a frightful carnage in the deep masses of Napoleon's troops, which, unable either to deploy under so terrific a fire, or to return it to advantage from the edges only of their columns, were swept away without the power of making any serious resistance. From the moment that the irruption of Lannes' column was stopped, and the regiments behind were compelled to halt, the French soldiers felt that the day was lost.* In vain the cuirassiers were brought forward, who dashed, as at Waterloo, through the intervals of the squares; in vain those brave horsemen rode round the steady battalions, and charged them repeatedly to the bayonets' points. Not one square was broken, not one column gave way; and the horsemen, grievously shattered by the terrible fire, were soon after charged by the enemy's reserve cavalry, under Lichtenstein, who came up with loud shouts from the rear, and driven back in disorder upon their own infantry.¹

¹ Sav. iv. 77.
Stat. 249,
251. Pel. ii.
318, 320.

At this critical moment, Hohenzollern, perceiving a considerable opening on the right of the French line, occasioned by the unequal advance of some of their regiments, seized the favourable opportunity to dash in with Troluk's regiment, and occupy the space: it sustained itself there against all the attacks of the enemy, till the Archduke, who at once saw the importance of this movement, supported that gallant corps, when almost over-

56,
Success of
Hohenzol-
lern, and
breaking of
the bridges.

* "We persisted," says Savary, an eyewitness, "in penetrating into the checker of squares which formed the enemy's line, when the extreme severity of the fire of grape and musketry obliged us to halt, and begin exchanging volleys with our antagonists under very disadvantageous circumstances. Every quarter of an hour which we passed in that position rendered our disadvantage greater. Our troops were all in mass or column, and could not deploy to return the fire with which they were assailed. From that moment it was easy to foresee, not only that the day could not have a favourable issue, but even that it would probably terminate in some disaster. They tried in vain to restore these disadvantages by charges of cuirassiers, which took place in several directions, but they had hardly pierced through the openings of the enemy's squares when they were assailed by the Austrian horse, three times more numerous, and driven back upon our infantry." This was *before* the breaking down of the bridges, which is afterwards mentioned by the Duke of Rovigo.—See SAVARY, iv. 77.

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whelmed by fatigue and numbers, by six regiments of Hungarian grenadiers. These fresh troops pressed forward, intersecting the whole French line, and overthrowing everything which opposed them : they even reached the batteries in the rear near Essling, where they were assailed by such a destructive fire from that village, that nothing but the presence of the Archduke, who hastened to the spot, enabled them to maintain their ground. At the same time, the want of ammunition began to be sensibly felt in the French army, especially by the artillery, the supplies of which were nearly exhausted by the incessant firing of the two days ; and accounts began to circulate, and soon spread like wildfire through the ranks, that the bridges were broken down, and all communication with the reserve posts, and two-thirds of Davoust's corps, still on the southern bank, cut off. In effect, at half-past eight, the alarming intelligence reached the Emperor that the fire-ships and heavy barks laden with stones, sent down the river by the Archduke, had, with the swelling of the river, produced the desired effect, and that a considerable part of the bridge over the main stream of the Danube had been swept away.¹

¹ Sav. iv. 77.
Stut. 251,
255. Jom.
iii. 205,
206. Pel. ii.
318, 320.
Archduke
Charles's
Account,
Ann. Reg.
1809, 391,
392.

57.
The French
retire to-
wards the
island of
Lobau.

In this terrible moment Napoleon's courage did not forsake him. Grave and thoughtful, but collected, he allayed by the calmness of his manner the alarm of those around him, and immediately gave the necessary orders to suspend the attack at all points, and fall back towards the island of Lobau. Before they could reach the columns in front, however, the advance of these was already arrested by the violence of the enemy's fire, and several battalions, melting away under the destructive storm, had begun to recede, or stood in a state of hesitation, unable to go on, unwilling to retire. The Austrians, perceiving these symptoms of vacillation, resumed the offensive at all points, and, forming two fresh columns of attack under Dedowich and Hohenlohe, made a sudden assault on Essling, which was carried, with the exception of the

great granary, at the very moment that the French centre, slowly retiring, re-entered the narrow plain between that village and Aspern, from which they had issued in all the confidence of victory in the morning. This important success rendered the situation of Napoleon wellnigh desperate, and disorder was rapidly spreading through the ranks; for Aspern, in spite of the most heroic efforts of Massena and le Grand, was in great part already lost, and the capture of the second village precluded almost entirely the possibility of a retreat to the river side.¹

He made the utmost exertions, therefore, to regain it, and General Mouton, at the head of a brigade of the Imperial Guard, being intrusted with the attack, advanced in double-quick time, and drove out the enemy at the point of the bayonet. Again the Austrians returned, and, pushing up to the very foot of the granary, fired, and thrust their bayonets into the loopholes from which the deadly fire issued which thinned their ranks. In the tumult, the upper part of the building took fire, but still the invincible French soldiers maintained themselves in the lower stories, amidst the roar of musketry, and the crash of burning rafters. Five times did the Hungarian grenadiers rush up to the flaming walls, and five times were they repulsed by the unconquerable firmness of the Old Guard. At length Rosenberg, finding that the enemy was resolved to maintain himself in that post at all hazards, and that the combat there was constantly fed by fresh reinforcements of the flower of the French army, drew off his troops; and, desisting from all further attack on the village, confined himself to an incessant fire of grape and round-shot upon the French columns, which, now in full retreat, were massed together in such extraordinary numbers at the entrance of the bridges leading to Lobau, that every shot told with fatal effect on men or horses.²

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¹ Nap. in
Month. ii.
77, 79. Sav.
iv. 78. Pel.
ii. 325, 327.

58.
Invincible
defence of
Essling by
the Imperial
Guard.

² Nap. in
Month. ii.
77, 79. Sav.
iv. 78, 79.
Pel. ii. 318,
325, 326.
Stat. 260,
268. Arch.
Charles,
Ann. Reg.
1809. 392,
393.

Anxious to crown his glorious efforts by a decisive attack, the Archduke now brought forward his last reserves

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59.

Last attack
of the Aus-
trians, and
fall of Mar-
shal Lannes.

of Hungarian grenadiers, and, putting himself at their head, advanced with an intrepid step against the retreating French columns, while the whole artillery, rapidly contracting into a semicircle round the diminished host, kept up an incessant and destructive fire. The most vivid disquietude seized the French generals when they beheld their wearied bands assailed by fresh troops, which seemed to have sprung up from the earth at the conclusion of this fight of giants. But Lannes arranged his best men in the rear of the columns, and, supporting them by the infantry and cuirassiers whom Napoleon sent up to his assistance, prepared to resist the attack ; while Massena, on his side, sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback, with his sword in his hand and resolution in his countenance, seemed to multiply as necessity required his presence. Reserving their fire to the last moment, the French veterans, when the Hungarians were within pistol-shot, poured in so close and destructive a volley that the advance of the enemy was checked, and a close combat with firearms commenced. At that moment, Lannes, who had dismounted from his horse to avoid the dreadful fire of the artillery, which swept off every thing above the heads of the soldiers, was struck by a cannon-ball, which carried away both his legs. As Napoleon was engaged in the island of Lobau, in directing the position of some batteries to protect the passage into that island from the field of battle, he saw a litter approaching, on which, when it came up, he beheld the heroic marshal, his early companion in arms in Italy, extended in the agonies of death.¹

¹ Stut. 272,
280. Sav.
iv. 79, 80.
Nap. in
Month. ii.
78, 79.

60.
His death.

Lannes seized his hand, and said, with a voice tremulous from loss of blood—"Adieu, Sire ! Live for the world ; but bestow a few thoughts on one of your best friends, who in a few hours will be no more." On his knees, beside the rude couch of the dying hero, Napoleon wept : "Lannes, do you not know me ? It is the Emperor—it is Buonaparte, your friend—you will yet be preserved

to us.”—“I would wish to live,” replied Lannes, “to serve you and my country ; but in an hour I shall be no more.” Napoleon was deeply affected ; he had never before evinced such emotion. “Nothing,” said he to Massena, “but so terrible a stroke could have withdrawn me for a moment from the care of the army.” Shortly after, Lannes was relieved from his sufferings by a faint, which, after some days, terminated in death. St Hilaire, at the same time, was brought in mortally wounded.* It was time that this terrible carnage should cease : the generals and superior officers were in great part struck down ; the artillery horses were almost all killed, and the guns, for the most part, drawn by the foot-soldiers ; the infantry and cannon had exhausted almost all their ammunition ; the cavalry had already all retired into the island of Lobau ; but still the rearguard, with unconquerable resolution, maintained the combat. The Austrians were nearly as much exhausted as their opponents ; and, desisting from all further attacks, maintained only a tremendous fire from all the batteries till midnight, when, the last of the enemy having withdrawn from the field of battle into the island, exhausted by fatigue, the artillerymen sank to sleep beside their guns.¹

Such was the famous battle of Aspern, the most glorious in the Austrian annals—for ever memorable in the annals of military fame. It was the first great action in which Napoleon had been defeated ; for at Eylau, though, as the event ultimately proved, he had been worsted, yet, in the first instance, he remained master of the field of battle.

* These officers were among the most esteemed of all Napoleon’s generals:—“‘Lannes,’ said he, ‘was wise, prudent, and withal audacious, gifted with imperturbable *sang-froid* in presence of the enemy. He had received little education ; all his qualities were derived from nature.’ Napoleon, who witnessed from his outset in the Italian campaigns the extension of his understanding, often remarked it with surprise. He was superior to all the French generals on the field of battle, in directing the movements of twenty-five thousand infantry. He was still young when he had thus risen to perfection ; perhaps he would have ultimately risen to the same eminence in strategy, which he did not as yet comprehend. St Hilaire was remarkable, ever since the battle of Castiglione in 1796, by his chivalrous character ; he was a good brother and parent,

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Pel. ii. 326,
327, 338.
Sav. iv. 79,
80. Thib. vii.
289, 290.
Stat. 272,
281. Nap.
in Month.
ii. 78, 79.

61.
Results of
the battle,
and loss on
both sides.

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The loss on both sides was enormous ; but that of the French was much greater than that of their opponents, owing to their decided inferiority in numbers, and especially in artillery, on the first day, and the tremendous effect of the concentric fire of three hundred pieces of cannon on the second, upon the dense columns of attack, which the narrow extent of the ground, the awful cannonade, and obstinate resistance of the Imperial squares, prevented from deploying into line. Eighty-seven superior officers and four thousand two hundred privates were killed, besides sixteen thousand three hundred wounded, on the side of the Imperialists—a loss which, however great, the Archduke, with true German honesty, had the magnanimity at once to admit in his official account of the battle. The French lost above thirty thousand men, of whom seven thousand were buried by the Austrians on the field ; a few guns and some hundred unhurt prisoners were taken on both sides : five thousand wounded fell into the hands of the Imperialists. For several days after the battle, the Austrians were constantly occupied in burying the dead ; innumerable corpses were found in the smaller channels of the Danube ; the waters even of that mighty stream were for some days poisoned by the multitude of slain which encumbered its banks, and a pestilential air was wafted down from the theatre of death.¹*

Driven back with all his army into an island in the Danube, after sustaining this frightful loss, the French Emperor, at ten at night, hastily called a council of war on the margin of the river. Seated under a tree which

¹ Archduke Charles's Official Account, Ann. Reg. 1809. Chron. 394. Pel. ii. 358. Thib. vii. 295.

and was devoted to the Emperor ever since the siege of Toulon. He was called, in the army, the chevalier without fear and without reproach. Napoleon shed bitter tears at his death and that of Lannes. They would not have been wanting in constancy in misfortune, nor have been faithless to the glory of France." —*NAPOLEON in MONTHOLON*, ii. 83, 84.

* The tenth bulletin acknowledged a loss of fifteen hundred killed and three thousand wounded : a list of casualties so obviously disproportioned to the magnitude and obstinacy of the conflict as to excite the ridicule of all Europe. Subsequently Napoleon admitted he had four thousand killed, which would imply a total loss of above twenty thousand. The Austrian official account, which derives credit from the candour with which it admitted their

overhung the stream, Napoleon beheld the great bridge in the central channel entirely swept away, and the lesser one of pontoons to the intermediate island of Reduit also in ruins. Retreat to the southern bank from the island of Lobau was evidently impossible; for the Danube, which had risen fourteen feet during the three preceding days, from the melting of the snows in the Alps of the Tyrol, was rolling impetuously in a raging flood, which had carried down every boat in the main channel, overflowed the whole low grounds in the island, and made even the narrow branch which separated them from the Marchfeld, usually only a few feet deep, a rapid and dangerous torrent. Never was an army assembled under more disastrous circumstances than the French on that memorable night. To the deep roar of artillery, the shouts of the combatants, and the incessant clang of musketry, had succeeded a silence yet more awful, interrupted only by the challenges of the sentinels, as they paced their melancholy rounds, or the groans of the wounded, who, without covering or shelter of any kind, lay scattered on the humid surface. Above twenty thousand brave men were there, weltering in their blood, or murmuring in their last moments a prayer for their mothers, their children, their country. Gloom had seized on every mind, despair had penetrated the bravest hearts. It was universally known that the artillery ammunition was exhausted, and the communication with the southern bank cut off; and it was difficult to see how an attack from the enemy, on the succeeding day, could be resisted

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62.
Deplorable
situation of
the French
army in the
island of
Lobau, on
the night of
the 22d.

own casualties, estimates the French loss at thirty-six thousand, on the authentic grounds that seven thousand French were buried on the field of battle, and twenty-nine thousand seven hundred and seventy-three wounded were carried to the hospitals at Vienna. The experience of the British in the Peninsular War, especially at Talavera and Albuera, warrants the assertion that two armies of from sixty thousand to eighty thousand on each side could not combat in so obstinate a manner for two days under the fire of five hundred pieces of cannon, all crossing each other, without a loss of above twenty thousand to the victorious and superior, and thirty thousand to the vanquished and weaker party.—See *Tenth Bulletin, Moniteur*, June 6, 1809; ARCHDUKE CHARLES'S *Official Account*, *Ann. Reg.* 1809, 395; *App. to Chronicle*; THIBAUDEAU, vii. 295.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Sav. iii.
81. Pel. ii.
337, 339.

63.
Council of
war in the
island of
Lobau, in
which it is
resolved by
Napoleon to
maintain
himself in
that island.

with any prospect of success. Nearly half the combatants had fallen: every one, even though unhurt himself, had to deplore the death of a friend, a comrade, a benefactor. Provisions there were none in the island; succour for the wounded, burial for the dead, were alike beyond the strength of the wearied survivors. A few were still buoyant with hope: and, protesting they had not been defeated, vociferously demanded a renewal of the combat on the morrow; but the great majority in gloomy silence mused upon their fate, and not a few openly murmured against the chief, whose imprudence and obstinacy had brought them into a situation where victory was hopeless and retreat impossible.¹

The influence of these gloomy feelings strongly appeared in the opinions of the chiefs who attended Napoleon at his council of war on the shores of the island of Lobau. The bravest marshals of the army, Massena, Davoust, Berthier, Oudinot, were there; but they unanimously and strongly expressed the opinion that it was necessary to retire entirely to the right bank of the river. Napoleon heard them all, and then observed—"But, gentlemen, when you advise me to withdraw across the river, it is the same thing as desiring me to retreat to Strassburg. We can no longer cross except in boats; and that is equivalent to saying it is nearly impracticable, and could not be effected without abandoning the wounded, the artillery, the horses, which would entirely disorganise the army. Shall we abandon the wounded? Shall twenty thousand brave men add to the trophies of the enemy?*" Shall we thus openly proclaim, in the face of Europe, that we have been vanquished? If we repass the Danube, the enemy will instantly do the same; and then we shall never find rest till we are under the cannon of Strassburg. Is it on the Traun, the Inn, or the Lech, that we can make a stand? No; we shall speedily be driven behind

* And yet the 10th bulletin only admitted a loss of 3000 wounded on both days.

the Rhine; and all the allies whom victory has given us will at once pass over to the enemy. Shall we add to the losses of these two days that of the men who are now dispersed among the woods of these islands? If I retire to Vienna, the Archduke will pass the Danube at Lintz, and I shall be under the necessity of marching to meet him, and sacrificing twenty thousand more in the hospitals, one half of whom, if I remain here, will rejoin their standards in a month. In a few days Eugene will descend from the Alps of Styria; the half of Lefebvre's corps will be disposable from the Tyrol; and even if the enemy, by passing at Lintz, should menace our existing line of retreat, we shall have a clear route open into Italy, where, with eight corps assembled,* we shall speedily regain our ascendancy. We must therefore remain at Lobau: you, Massena, will complete what you have so gloriously begun; you alone can restrain the Archduke, and prevent his advancing, during the few days which are necessary to re-establish our communications."¹

The marshals, struck by the justice as well as fortitude of these remarks, all assented to the Emperor's opinions; and it was resolved to defend the isle of Lobau to the last extremity. The whole engineers and sappers in the island were immediately embarked for the right bank; and at midnight the Emperor committed himself to a frail bark with Berthier and Savary, and was ferried across the roaring flood to Ebersdorf. He leaned on Savary's arm in passing from the bark to the village; but though his mind laboured, he was not agitated. Exhausted by fatigue, he threw himself on some straw, and took a few hours' sleep; but shortly after daybreak he was again on horseback, actively organising the transmission of provisions to the troops in the island, and preparing the means of re-establishing the bridges.²†

CHAP.
LVII.
1809.

¹Sav. iv. 81,
82. Pel. ii.
330, 333.

64.
The position there is according-ly maintained, and Napoleon retires to Vienna.

²Sav. iv. 81,
83. Pel. ii.
330, 333.
Jom. iii. 213.

* Viz. those of Eugene, Marmont, Macdonald, Lefebvre, Bernadotte, Davoust, Oudinot, Massena, besides the Guard and reserve; in all, notwithstanding their losses, a hundred and forty thousand men.—JOMINI, iii. 213.

† Several writers, and in particular one celebrated historian, whose temper

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

65.

Reflections
on the tac-
tics of Na-
poleon in
the battle
of Aspern.¹ See Nap.
in Month.
ii. 71, 83.
Pelet, ii.
358, 364.
Jom. iii.
217, 220.

The conduct of Napoleon in provoking an engagement with inferior forces in so hazardous a situation as the Marchfeld, with a single and insecure bridge in his rear, has been the subject of keen discussion by the French military writers; and three of the most distinguished of them have undertaken its defence, and pleaded it with all their wonted ability.¹ But there are some questions so plain, that in discussing them the strength of a child is equal to that of a giant; and if Napoleon, Cæsar, and Hannibal, were to concur in justifying that extraordinary step, they would fail in producing any impression upon the common sense of mankind. The military is not, any more than politics, at least in its leading principles, an abstruse art; whatever directs the proceedings of large masses of mankind must be founded on maxims obvious to every capacity. Napoleon himself has told us that the leading object in strategy is, with a force inferior upon the whole, to be always superior at the point of attack; and that the greatest fault a commander can commit is to fight with no other line of retreat than by a narrow defile. His main charge against the generalship of Wellington, is founded upon the fact of his having fought at Waterloo with a single highway traversing the forest of Soignies in his rear.² “The position of Mont

² 9th Book,
Nap. 207.

and judgment are not equal to his talent, (MONTGAILLARD, vi. 405,) have represented the early retreat of Napoleon from the field of battle in the evening of the 22d, into the island of Lobau, and thence at midnight across the main stream to Vienna, as a pusillanimous desertion of his troops, which brings both his courage and capacity seriously into question. There does not seem to be any ground for this opinion. Chiefs were not wanting to the French Emperor, who would, with the utmost gallantry, head and stimulate the charges of the troops; but his own proper sphere of action was different, and one mind only could sustain the weight of the direction of a hundred and fifty thousand men. Had Napoleon fallen at the head of his Guards on the Marchfeld, no other moral courage would have been equal to sustaining the conflict; the army would have retreated to the Rhine, and the mighty fabric of the empire have been dissolved in a moment. The time had not yet arrived when it was the duty of its chief to conquer or die. The case was different with the Archduke Charles; when he put himself at the head of the regiment of Zach, and, with the standard in his hand, threw himself on the enemy, the last hour of the Austrian monarchy appeared to be near at hand. The conflict was similar to that of the French on the heights of Montmartre: vain would be all the skill of the generalissimo,

St Jean," said Napoleon, "was *ill-chosen*. *The first requisite of a field of battle is to have no defiles in its rear.* The injudicious choice of the field of battle rendered to the English army all retreat impossible."

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

Judging by these principles, which are recommended not less by the weight of his authority than by their intrinsic justice and sense, what are we say to the general who, though superior by twenty thousand men upon the whole to his adversary, on the first day, according to his own account of the matter, exposed twenty-five thousand men * to a hopeless contest with eighty thousand; and, on the second, precipitated seventy thousand, in close columns, against a semicircle of batteries containing three hundred guns, every shot from which fell with the certainty of destruction upon their crowded ranks, and that, too, when a vast river, traversed only by a tottering bridge, connected the troops in advance with the reserve of the army, and served as the only possible way of retreat to them in case of disaster? It is in vain that his defenders argue that eight divisions on the field of battle, with four under Davoust on the right bank, were equal to any force the Austrians could bring against them. Granted, provided always the communication between them was secure: but what is to be said to hazarding two-thirds of the

66.
His military
errors and
rashness on
this occa-
sion.

unless, in that decisive moment, the bravery of the colonel repaired the disorder, and arrested the dreadful irruption of Lannes' columns.

* "On the two banks of the Danube," says Napoleon, "I had, at the time of the battle of Aspern, twenty thousand men more than the Archduke. In the battle of the 21st, twenty-five thousand men combated a hundred thousand during three hours and a half, and preserved their positions."—*NAPOLEON in MONTHOLON*, ii. 78, *Mélanges*. These numbers are grossly exaggerated, according to his usual practice; but the greater the disproportion is made, the worse for Napoleon; for how did a general, at the head of a hundred and twenty thousand men, come to expose twenty-five thousand to so grievous a chance as combating against such odds, with a river all but impassable in their rear? There are occasions in war when such a risk as this must be incurred, and when to hazard it is the first duty of a commander. Such was Wellington's situation on the Douro in 1809, and Napoleon's own at Lodi in 1796, and in Champagne in 1814. But in 1809 he lay under no such necessity; the capital, the resources, the arsenals of Austria were in his power; the great stroke which was to fascinate mankind had been struck; it was the Archduke who was in the predicament of being compelled to undertake perilous measures.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Nap. in
Month. ii.
77.

army on the left bank, when a narrow bridge, a mile in length, shaking under the flood, separated that portion from the remaining third on the other bank ? Napoleon has himself told us that “*twice*, on the 21st, the bridges were carried away by the flood, and that the Austrian boats were already dashing against the pontoons. At midnight the Danube rose in the most frightful manner, and the passage was a third time interrupted, and not restored till next morning, when the Guard and Oudinot’s corps commenced their passage.”¹ What temerity, then, in such circumstances, to hazard a decisive action on the day following with the whole Austrian army, and precipitate Lannes into the centre of their batteries, early in the morning, before either the bulk of Davoust’s corps or the reserve parks of ammunition had crossed the perilous passage !

67.
Observa-
tions on the
French
method of
attacking
in column.

Nor is this all ; the result of the battle of Aspern clearly demonstrates, that the method of attacking in column in a narrow field, and against a brave enemy, is essentially defective ; and that the prodigious loss sustained by Napoleon was owing to his persisting in it under circumstances where it had obviously become inexpedient. The observations of a distinguished French military writer on this subject are convincing and unanswerable. “The battle of Essling was lost,” says General Rogniat, “in consequence of our having attacked in *column* the centre of the Austrian line. That centre skilfully gave ground as the French columns of Lannes and Oudinot advanced, while their wings insensibly approached our flanks. By means of that skilful manœuvre, we soon found ourselves in the centre of a semicircle of artillery and musketry, the whole fire of which converged on our unhappy columns. Cannon-balls, musket-shots, shells, grape, bombs, crossed each other in every line over our heads, and fell on our ranks like a hail-storm.”² Everything was struck down or overturned, and our leading columns were literally destroyed : in the

² Rogniat,
sur l’Art
Militaire,
333.

end we were obliged to fall back and yield to that frightful tempest, till we again came abreast of Aspern and Essling, the bulwarks of our wings." It was by a system of tactics precisely similar that Hannibal crushed the Roman centre, and gained the battle of Cannæ. "*Cuneus Gallorum ut pulsus æquavit frontem primum, deinde nitendo etiam sinum in medio dedit, Afri circa jam cornua fecerant, irruentibusque incaute in medium Romanis circumdedere alas. Mox, cornua extendendo, clausêre et ab tergo hostes.*"* The military art is in its fundamental principles the same in all ages; and it is highly interesting to see Hannibal's triumph, and Napoleon's defeat, arise, under the greatest possible difference of ground, arms, and contending nations, from the same simple and obvious cause.^{1†}

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Polyb. iii.
c. 12. Liv.
xxii. 47.

The Austrians, indeed, had not yet attained to the incomparable discipline and firmness which enabled Wellington with British troops so often to repel with prodigious slaughter the French attack in column by a single line, three or four deep. But they did on this occasion, as well as long at Wagram, successfully resist it by receiving the column in a checker of battalions in column—a disposition extremely similar to that adopted by the British commander at Waterloo, and which the Archduke then adopted for the first time, after having read a few weeks before the chapter on the principles of war, by General Jomini, where it was strenuously recom-

68.
Disadvantages of the
attack in
column
when
steadily
resisted.

* "The wedge of the Gauls, being repulsed, in the first instance retired to their original ground, then fell gradually back, and made a curve in the centre of the line. The Africans assembled on the wings, and, as the Romans incautiously advanced into the heart of the battle, fell on their flanks. Soon, extending their wings, they shut them in even in rear also."—LIVY, xxii. 47.

† Napoleon saw these principles clearly, when judging of the conduct of other generals:—"Sempronius," says he, "was conquered at the Trebbia and Varro at Cannæ, though they commanded armies more numerous than Hannibal's, because, in conformity with the Roman practice, they arranged their troops in a column of three lines, while Hannibal drew up his in a single line. The Carthaginian cavalry was superior in number and quality; the Roman legions were attacked in front, flank, and rear, and in consequence defeated. If the two consuls had adopted an order of battle more conformable to circumstances, they would probably have conquered." What a luminous commentary

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

¹ Jom. Vie
de Nap. iii.
201.

mended.¹* The dreadful carnage sustained by the French troops in subsequent battles, especially at Albuera, Borodino, and Waterloo, was mainly owing to the same cause. Doubtless, the attack in column is most formidable, and it requires great firmness in a single line to resist a mass to which weight and numbers have given so much momentum. But its success depends entirely on the courage of the leading and flanking files; its ranks, massed together, present an unerring mark for the enemy's fire, if they will only stand to deliver it; confusion is apt to arise in the centre from the losses sustained or witnessed by men not warmed by the heat of action; and if it is exposed to a concentric discharge, or meets with opponents as resolute as itself, it becomes liable to a bloody reverse. The same principle applies to breaking the line at sea: that system has done admirably with the French and Spaniards; but let the British admirals consider well before they adopt it in combating the Russians or Americans.

69.
Napoleon's
reason for
his rash
conduct.

² Las Cases,
vi. 41; vii.
125.

In truth, nothing can be more apparent than that, considered merely in a military point of view, the conduct of Napoleon, in regard to the battle of Aspern, was altogether inexcusable, and that it was the peculiarity and hazard of his political situation which made him persist in so perilous an undertaking. He has told us so himself: "At Aspern, at Jena, at Austerlitz, where I have been accused of acting rashly, I had no option: I was placed in the alternative of victory or ruin."² He felt that his situation, as head of a military republic, required continual excitement for its maintenance; that he must fascinate the minds of men by rapid and dazzling successes; and that the first pause in the career of victory was the commencement of ruin. Though in possession

on his own conduct and defeat at Aspern!—See NAPOLEON in MONTH. i. 282, *Mélanges*.

* Each battalion was drawn up in column by divisions; and as each division consisted of two platoons or companies, this was in fact forming them in column of attack on the two centre companies. And the battalion, consisting of six companies, or three divisions, was thus drawn up in three lines.

of the Austrian capital, military resources, and finest provinces, he still felt that the contest must not be protracted, and that to keep up his character for invincibility, he must cross the Danube, and finish the war by a clap of thunder. Undue contempt for the Austrian troops, or ignorance of the magnitude of the host which they had at hand, led him to hazard the engagement of the 21st, with a most unequal force ; and having once engaged, however imprudently, in the contest, he conceived that he must at all hazards carry it on, and, despite of his army being divided by the Danube, and the difficulty of safe retreat, fight for life or death in the plain of the Marchfeld. It is the invariable characteristic of revolutionary power, whether political or military, to be perpetually exposed to this necessity, from the want of any lasting support in the interest and affection of the industrious classes of the people. And it is in the experience of that necessity, not in any oblivion of the rules of the military art, that the true explanation and best vindication of Napoleon's conduct, both at Aspern, Moscow, and Dresden, is to be found.

The resolute stand made by the Austrians at Aspern, is one of the most glorious instances of patriotic resistance which the history of the world affords. Driven back by an overwhelming force into the heart of the monarchy, with their fortresses taken, their arsenals pillaged, their armies defeated, they still continued the contest ; boldly fronted the invader in the plenitude of his power ; and with unshaken resolution advanced, alone and unsupported, to drive the conqueror of Europe from the capital he had subdued. Contrary to what has usually been experienced in similar cases, they showed the world that the fall of the metropolis did not necessarily draw after it the submission of the empire ; but that a brave and patriotic people can find their capital in the general's headquarters, and reduce the invader to the extremity of peril, in consequence of the very success which he had

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

70.
Glorious
character of
the Austrian
resistance
at Aspern.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

deemed decisive of the contest. The British historian can hardly hope that similar resolution would have been displayed by the citizens of his own country ; or that a battle of Waterloo would have been fought by the English after London and Woolwich had fallen into the hands of the enemy. Contrasting the heroic battles of Aspern and Wagram, after Vienna had been captured, with the unbounded terror inspired at Paris by the advance of the Duke of Brunswick to Valmy in 1792, a hundred and twenty miles from the capital, even when the people were in the highest state of democratic excitement, it is impossible to avoid the inference—that as much in the conduct of a nation, under such circumstances, depends on the national institutions as on the stage at which they have arrived in social advancement ; and in the invincible tenacity and far-seeing sagacity of an aristocratic government is to be found the only guarantee, from the days of Cannæ to those of Aspern, for such an unshaken resolution, under calamities generally considered as utterly destructive of political independence.

71.
Disastrous
effects of the
Archduke
John's dis-
obedience
of orders.

Nor would this heroic constancy have failed in obtaining its appropriate reward, if the admirable directions of the Archduke Charles for the conduct of the campaign had been implicitly obeyed. It was the disobedience of his orders by the Archduke John which deprived the Austrians of all the results of the battle of Aspern, and enabled Napoleon to extricate himself with success from the most perilous situation in which he had yet been placed since ascending the consular throne. Had that prince obeyed the instructions which he received from the generalissimo on the 17th May, and marched direct from Carinthia to Lintz, he would, in conjunction with Kollowrath, who was in that neighbourhood some days before, have been at the head of an imposing mass at least sixty thousand strong, even on the 23d, to which Bernadotte, with his inefficient corps of Saxons, could have opposed no adequate resistance. Can there be a doubt that the

concentration of such a force directly in his rear, and on his principal line of communication, at the very moment when he was driven with a defeated army into the island of Lobau, would have compelled Napoleon to retreat; and that the battle of Aspern would have been the commencement of a series of disasters, which would speedily have brought the Imperial eagles back to the Rhine? The instantaneous effect which a similar concentration of force from the north and the south at Borissow, near the Beresina, produced on Napoleon at Moscow, three years afterwards, affords the clearest illustration, both of the importance of this movement, and of the prodigious effects which it was fitted to have had, if properly executed, upon the issue of the campaign. No hazard was incurred by such a direction to part of the Imperial forces; for the Tyrol afforded a vast fortress, in which, aided by its gallant mountaineers, the detached corps, though separated from the main forces of the monarchy, might have long maintained themselves against all the efforts of the enemy. And it is impossible to estimate too highly the fortitude and talent of the illustrious general, who, when still reeking with the slaughter of a recent defeat, could conceive so admirable a plan for the circumvention of the enemy, and, undismayed by the fall of the capital, see in that catastrophe only the lure which was to seduce the invader to his ultimate ruin.

From the important consequences which followed the occupation of Vienna, and the seizure of its immense military resources by the French, may be deduced one conclusion of lasting value to every independent state. This is the incalculable importance of every metropolis either being adequately fortified, or possessing, in its immediate vicinity, a citadel of approved strength, capable of containing twenty or thirty thousand soldiers, and of serving as a place of secure deposit for the public archives, stores, wealth, and government, till the national strength can be fairly roused for their rescue. Had

72.
Immense
importance
of central
fortresses on
the defence
of nations.

CHAP.
LVII.

1809.

Austria possessed such a fortress either in or near Vienna, the invasions of 1805 and 1809 would have terminated in the invader's ruin; had the heights of Belleville and Montmartre been strongly fortified, the invasions of 1814 and 1815 would have been attended with nothing but disaster to the Allied armies. Had Berlin been of as great strength as Dantzic, the French armies, after the disaster of Jena, would have been detained round its walls till the Russian hosts advanced, and six years of bondage saved to the Prussian monarchy. Had the Kremlin been a citadel capable of holding out six weeks, the terrible sacrifice of Moscow would not have been required: had Vienna not been impregnable to the Mussulman arms, the monarchy would have sunk in the dust before the standards of Sobieski gleamed on the Bisamberg. Had the lines of Torres Vedras not proved an impassable barrier to Massena, the fire of patriotic resistance in the Peninsula would have been extinguished in blood: had the walls of Rome not deterred the Carthaginian hero from a siege, the fortunes of the republic would have sunk after the disaster of Cannæ. It is by no means necessary for these important ends, that the whole metropolis should be environed by fortifications; it is enough that a citadel of great strength is at hand to contain all the warlike and civil resources of the kingdom.

73.

Infatuation
of England
in this re-
spect.

¹ Nap. in
Month. ii.
278, 280.

Let no nation imagine that the magnitude of its resources relieves it from this necessity, or that the effulgence of its glory will secure it from ultimate danger. It was *after* the battle of Austerlitz that Napoleon first felt the necessity of fortifying Paris; ¹ it was in nine short years afterwards that the bitter consequences of the national vanity, which prevented his design from being carried into effect, were experienced by the Parisians. England now slumbers secure under the shadow of Trafalgar and Waterloo; but let not her infatuated children suppose that they are for ever removed from the

chances of disaster, or that the want of citadels to surround the vast arsenals of Woolwich, Chatham, and the Tower, will not, and that perhaps ere long, be bitterly felt against either foreign or domestic enemies. These ideas, indeed, are not popular with the present age, with whom foresight is the least cultivated of national virtues, and in which the democratic character of the legislature has tinged the government with that disregard of remote consequences, and that unconquerable aversion to present burdens, which is the invariable characteristic of the masses of mankind. Without doubt, if any minister were now to propose the expenditure of one or two millions on such central fortifications, it would raise such a storm as would speedily prove fatal to his administration. It does by no means, however, follow from this circumstance, that it is not a measure which wisdom dictates and national security enjoins ; and in despair of effecting, at present at least, any change in public opinion on this particular, the historian has only to bequeath this counsel, as Bacon did his reputation, to the generation after the next, and to mark these words, if they should live so long, for the judgment of the world after the expiration of two centuries.

CHAPTER LVIII.

WAR IN THE TYROL, NORTHERN GERMANY, AND POLAND.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

1.

Extraordi-
nary inter-
est of the
Tyrolese
war.

It is neither on the greatest fields of battle, nor the places where the most calamitous bloodshed has taken place, that the recollection of future ages is chiefly riveted. The vast theatres of Asiatic conflict are forgotten ; the slaughtered myriads of Timour and Genghis Khan lie in undistinguished graves ; hardly a pilgrim visits the scenes where, on the fields of Chalons and Tours, the destinies of civilisation and Christendom were fixed by the skill of Aëtius and the valour of Charles Martel. It is moral grandeur which produces a durable impression ; it is patriotic heroism which permanently attracts the admiration of mankind. The pass of Thermopylæ, the graves of Marathon, will warm the hearts of men through every succeeding age : the chapel of Tell, the field of Morgarten, still attract the generous and brave from every civilised state : the name of Wallace, the plain of Bannockburn, have rendered Scottish story immortal in the annals of the world. The time may come when the vast and desolating wars of the French Revolution shall be dimmed in the obscurity of evolving years ; when the great name of Napoleon is recollected only as a shadow of ancient days, and the fields of his fame are buried in the waves of succeeding change ; but even then, the siege of Saragossa will stand forth in undecaying lustre from amid the gloom of ages ; and the war in the

Tyrol, the strife of la Vendée, survive unshaken above the floods of time.

CHAP.
LVIII.

The country now immortalised under the name of the Tyrol, the land of Hofer and Spechbacher, lies on the southern frontier of Germany, and is composed of the mountains which, stretching eastward from the Alps of Switzerland, are interposed between the Bavarian plains and the fields of Italy. Less elevated than those of the Helvetian cantons, without the awful sublimity of the Alps of the Oberland, or the savage wildness of the Aiguilles of Chamouny, the mountains of the Tyrol are still more romantic, from the singular and imposing character which they in general bear, and the matchless beauty of the narrow valleys, or rather clefts, which are interspersed around their feet. Their summits, though in one or two cases little inferior in height to the Jungfrau or the Titlis, are more rugged than those of Switzerland, from being in general somewhat lower, and in consequence less charged with snow, and exhibiting their various strata, ravines, and peaks in more undisguised grandeur than where a silver mantle has been for ever thrown over the higher regions. The general level of the country is less elevated than the central parts of Helvetia, and hence it is often more beautiful : the pine and larch do not appear in such monotonous masses : but noble forests of beech and oak clothe the mountain sides to a greater height than that of any hills in Britain, and a dark zone of pine separates their brilliant hues from the gray piles of rock, or snow-besprinkled peaks, which repose in undisturbed serenity on the azure firmament.¹

1809.

2.
Description
of the Tyrol.

Atlas,
Plate 24.

¹ Personal
observation.
Malte-Brun,
vii. 510,
511. Inglis's
Tyrol, i. 241.

The northern and southern slopes of the Alps exhibit here, as elsewhere on the sides of the great stony girdle of the globe, the same remarkable difference in the productions of nature, the character of the landscape, and the disposition of the human species. To the north of the central chain of the Brenner, everything wears a frigid aspect. Vast forests of pine and fir clothe the

3.
Opposite
character of
the northern
and southern
sides of the
mountains.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

middle regions of the mountains ; naked rock or masses of snow compose their highest peaks ; extensive pastures afford nourishment to numerous flocks and herds ; barley and oats constitute the principal food of the inhabitants, and Indian corn is cultivated only in the rich and sheltered vale of the Inn. The inhabitants, like all those of Germanic descent, are brave, impetuous, and honest ; tenacious of custom, fearless of danger, addicted to intemperance. But to the south of the range, these rigid features insensibly melt away under the increasing warmth of a more genial climate. Maize and wheat are reared with assiduous care in the few level spots which are interspersed among the rocks ; walnut and cherry trees next give token of the approach of a milder atmosphere ; beech and sweet chestnut succeed to the sable pine in the woody region above ; the vine and the mulberry are found in the sheltered bosoms of the valleys ; and at length the olive and the pomegranate nestle in the sunny nooks, where, on the margin of the lake of Garda, the blasts of winter are averted by a leafy screen of almost perpetual verdure. But if the gifts of nature improve as the traveller descends to the plains of Lombardy, the character of man declines : with the sweet accents of the Italian tongue, the vices of civilisation, the craft of the south, have sensibly spread. The cities are more opulent, the churches more costly, the edifices more sumptuous ; but the native virtues of the German population are no longer conspicuous : the love of freedom, the obligation of truth, the sanctity of an oath, are more faintly discerned ; iron bars on the windows of the poor tell but too clearly that the fearless security of general virtue is no longer felt ; and the multiplication of criminals and police bespeaks at once the vices and necessities of a corrupted society.¹ *

¹ Inglis's
Tyrol, ii.
210, 290.
Personal
observation.

* Out of eighty prisoners in Innsbruck jail in 1832, fifty-five were from the Italian Tyrol, though its population is only one hundred and sixty-three thousand, while that of the German portion is five hundred and ninety-eight thousand.—INGLIS'S *Tyrol*, i. 185 ; and MALTE-BRUN, vii. 550.

Switzerland contains some spacious and fertile plains, and extensive lakes diversify the generally rugged aspect of nature ; but the Tyrol is a country of mountains, intersected only by a few long and spacious valleys. Of these, those of the Inn, the Eisach, the Adige, and the Pusterthal, are the most considerable. The first is formed by the river Inn, commencing on the eastern slope of the mountains of the Grisons : it extends nearly a hundred miles almost in a straight line in a north-easterly direction, and under the successive names of the Engadine, the Upper and the Lower Innthal, extends from Finstermunz, on the frontiers of Switzerland, to Kufstein at the opening of the Bavarian plains. It is at first a cold and desolate pastoral glen, gradually opening into a cultivated vale, shut in by pine-clad hills of savage character ; and for the last fifty miles expands into a spacious valley, varying from two to six miles in breadth, whose fertile bottom, perfectly flat, shut in on either side by precipitous mountains seven or eight thousand feet in height, is adorned with numerous villages, churches, and towns, and maintains a dense and industrious population. The valley of the Eisach, formed by the confluence at Brixen of the torrents which descend from the snowy summits of the Brenner and the Gross Terner on the one side, and the mountains of the Pusterthal on the other, descends beside an impetuous stream, through the narrow passes and chesnut-clad steepes between Brixen and Bolsano. It is at length lost, at the latter place, in the larger valley of the Adige, which, stretching out to the south in a wide expanse between piles of fir-clad mountains to Trent and Roveredo, gradually warms under the Italian sun, till, after passing the frightful gorge of the Italian Chiusa,* it opens into the smiling hills and vine-clad slopes of Verona.¹

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4.

Description
of the great
valleys and
rivers of
the Tyrol.¹ Malte-
Brun, vii.
511. Per-
sonal obser-
vation.

* This noble scene, one of the most striking gorges in the Alps, has been immortalised in the lines of Dante :

“ Era lo loco ove a scender la riva,
Venimmo Alpestro, e per quel ch’ ivi er’ anco
Tal ch’ ogni vista ne sarebbe schiva.

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LVIII.1809.
5.Valley of
the Adige,
and its
rapid.

The valley of the Etch, or Adige, descending from the cold and shivering Alps of Glurns, widens into the Passeyrthal, the original seat of the Counts of the Tyrol, still containing their venerable castle, and which has been immortalised as containing the birthplace of Hofer. It is distinguished by an awful rapid, which, more nearly than anything in Europe, resembles those of the great American rivers, equalling even the fall of Schaffhausen in sublimity and terror;* after descending this foaming declivity, and forcing its way through stupendous rocks, the Adige joins the vale of the Eisach at Bolsano. These are the principal valleys of the Tyrol, but the upper parts of several others belong to the same country; in particular, those of the Drave, the Salza, and the Brenta. The two first, descending from opposite sides of the Gross Glockner, find their way into the open country, through long defiles of matchless beauty: the former, after washing the battlements of Klagenfurth, to the Hungarian plains; the latter, beneath the towers of Salzburg, to the waters of the Danube; while the Brenta, after struggling through the narrow clefts and romantic peaks of the Val Sugana, emerges in still serenity into the Italian fields under the mouldering walls of Bassano.¹

¹ Personal observation.
Inglis's Tyrol, i. 289, 290.
Malte Brun, vii. 511.

6.
Castles of
the Tyrol.

With the exception of the Grisons, Switzerland contains few ruined castles. The moral earthquake which five centuries ago overthrew the feudal power of Austria in the Forest Cantons, cast down in its subsequent shocks

Qual è quella ruina che nel fianco
Di qua da Trento, l'Adice percosse
O per tremuoto o per sostegno manco,
Che da cima del monte onde se mosse
Al piano è sì la roccia discosciosa,
Ch' alcuna via darebbe a chi su fosse."

DANTE, *Inferno*, Canto xii. 1-9.

* This remarkable rapid, the only one which conveys to a European traveller an idea of this striking feature of Transatlantic scenery, is thus described with graphic power and perfect fidelity by a distinguished traveller now no more:—"At this spot the river Adige presents one of the most magnificent

the authority of the barons in their simple valleys. But the case is otherwise in the Tyrol. Though enjoying, practically speaking, popular privileges of the most extensive kind, and yielding in no respect to the descendants of Tell in the ardent love of freedom, the Tyrolese have never gone so far as to expel the great proprietors ; and though few of them are still resident in the country, the remains of their immense castles constitute one of its most peculiar and characteristic features. In every valley they are to be seen, rising in imposing majesty on wooded heights, perched on crags, overhanging the floods, or resting on cliffs to all appearance inaccessible to human approach. The effect of these venerable and mouldering remains, surmounting the beautiful woods, and throwing an air of Gothic interest over the wildest ranges of the mountains, is inexpressibly charming. They go far to compensate the comparative absence of lakes, which alone are wanting to render the scenery of this country the most enchanting in Europe. Almost all these castles have their legends or romantic incidents, many of them connected with the Holy Wars, which are fondly dwelt on by the population : in several, the weapons and armour of the heroes of the crusades are still preserved ; and the traveller, in treading their long-deserted halls, feels himself suddenly transported to the age of Godfrey of Bouillon, or Richard of England, and all the pomp and interest of chivalrous exploits.^{1*}

¹ Personal
observation.

Tyrol Proper has few lakes, though the adjoining

spectacles that are to be met with in Europe—a rapid, almost a cataract, nearly a mile in length—one continued sheet of foam, rushing with a deafening noise and resistless force between green pastoral banks more resembling the shores of a gentle lake than of a cataract. There is no fall of water in Switzerland that will bear a comparison with this: it is not, indeed, strictly a cataract, but a waterfall of the most stupendous and imposing kind, more striking, even, than the celebrated falls of Schaffhausen.”—INGLIS'S *Tyrol*, ii. 240. On a miniature scale, the falls of Kilmorag, beyond Inverness, somewhat resemble these sublime rapids.—*Personal Observation*.

* Eight-and-twenty colossal bronze statues of princes and paladins of the

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7.

Its lakes.

countries of Styria, Salzburg, and Bavaria, have several. Two most beautiful ones, the Kochel See and Walchen See, adjoin the great road from Munich to Innspruck, and give token to the enraptured traveller of his approach to the mountain region. The first, which much resembles, though on a grander and more perfect scale, Loch Katrine in Scotland, is described by an author who has transferred into romance the hues and colouring of nature :—"From the lake up to the very sky, on three sides stretched the mountains, like Titan steps whereby to scale the heavens, but divided at different angles by intervening valleys, up which was seen the long blue perspective of interminable hills beyond. The first step of that mountain throne, carpeted as if with green velvet by pastures still unembrowned and rich, was covered with sheep and cattle feeding in peace. Beyond that, appeared a range clothed with glowing woods of oak, elm, and beech, filled with the more timid and gentle inhabitants of the sylvan world ; while above, tenanted by the wolf, the fox, and other beasts of prey, stretched wide the region of the pine and fir : and towering over all, gray, cold, and awful, rose the peaks of primeval granite, with nothing but the proud eagle soaring between them and heaven. Below, the lake, unruffled by a breeze, lay calm and still, offering a mirror to the beauty of the scene, where every line of picturesque loveliness was reflected without a change, and all the varied colouring around, from the rich brown of the autumnal woods to the purple of the distant mountains, and the floods of amber and of rose that evening was pouring along the glowing sky."¹

¹ James's
Attila, ii.
141.

In every part of the world, mountainous regions have

middle ages, in armour, stand around the tomb of Maximilian I. in the church of Holycross in Innspruck, and the effect of the group is extremely impressive ; though hardly equal to that of the simple tomb of Hofer, which it also contains, whose remains were brought there from his grave at Mantua in 1823. The castle of Ambras, near Innspruck, formerly contained a unique collection of ancient armour, which, when the author visited it in 1816, was one of the most

been the nursery of superstitious feeling. The greatest works of man there appear as nothing compared to the magnificence of nature, and the individual is left in solitude, to receive the impressions which the sublime scenery in which he is placed is fitted to produce. Upon minds so circumstanced, the changes of external nature come to be considered as the immediate work of some invisible power. The shadows that fall on the lakes at sunrise are interpreted as the approach of hostile bands; the howl of the wind through the forests is thought to be the lamentations of the dead who are expiating their sins, and the mists that flit over the summit of the mountains seem to be the distant skirts of vast armies, borne on the whirlwind and treading on the storm. The influence of these feelings is strongly felt in the Tyrol; and the savage mountains or ruined castles with which it abounds have become peopled with the phantoms of a romantic superstition. Lights are said to have been often observed at night in towers which have been uninhabited for centuries, and bloody figures distinctly seen to flit through their deserted halls. The armour which still hangs on the walls in many of the greater castles, has been observed to move, and the plumes to wave, when the Tyrolese arms were victorious in war. Groans, they affirm, are still heard in the neighbourhood of the dungeons, where the victims of feudal tyranny were formerly sacrificed; and the cruel baron, who persecuted his people in his savage passion for the chase, is often heard to shriek, in the forests of the Unterberg,* and to howl as he flies from the dogs whom he had trained to the scent of human blood.¹

Superstitions, too, of a higher and more holy kind have arisen from the devout feelings of the people, and

interesting spectacles in Europe; but the greater part of these precious remains have since been removed to the Imperial museum at Vienna.—See INGLIS'S *Tyrol*, i. 200, 219; and EUSTACE'S *Italy*, i. 91.

* A romantic mountain, six miles from Salzburg, at the entrance of the beautiful valley of Berchtolsgaden.

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8.

Superstitions of the country.

¹ Barth. Krieg von 1809. Personal information. Gesch. And. Hofer, 32, 36.

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1809.

9.

Their religious feelings and impressions.

the associations connected with the particular spots where persons of extraordinary sanctity have dwelt. In many of the farthest recesses of the mountains, on the verge of perpetual desolation, hermits in former times had fixed their abode ; and the imagination of the peasant still fancies that their spirits hover around the spots where their earthly trials were endured. Shepherds, who have passed in the gloom of the evening by the cell where the bones of a saint are laid, relate that they distinctly heard his voice, as he repeated his vesper prayers, and saw his form, as he knelt before the crucifix which the piety of succeeding ages had erected in his hermitage. The image of many a patron saint has been seen to shed tears when a reverse has happened to the Tyrolese arms ; and the garlands which are hung round the crosses of the Virgin wither when the hand which raised them has fallen in battle. Peasants, who have been driven by a storm to take shelter in the little chapels which are scattered over the country, have seen the crucifix bow its head ; and solemn music has been heard at vespers in the higher places of worship among the mountains. The distant pealing of the organ, and the chant of innumerable voices, are there distinctly heard ; and the peasant, when returning at night from the chase, often trembles when he beholds funeral processions clothed in white, marching in silence through the gloom of the forests, or slowly moving on the clouds that float over the summits of the mountains.¹

¹ Barth. Krieg von 1809, 382, 394. Personal information.

10.

Omens which were observed on the approach of the war.

It may easily be imagined how strongly these feelings were excited by the approach of the war of deliverance in 1809. The emissaries of Austria had long before prepared the people for revolt ; foreign oppression had led them to desire it with passionate ardour ; unknown to Bavaria, the whole population were impatiently expecting the signal to rise. During this period of anxious expectation, the excited minds of the people clothed the air with an unusual number of imaginary appearances.

In the gloom of the evening, endless files of visionary soldiers, clad in the Austrian uniform—cavalry, infantry, and artillery—were seen to traverse the mountain-tops. The creaking of the wheels, the tramp of the horses, the heavy tread of marching columns, intermingled with wild bursts of laughter and shouts of triumph, were distinctly heard; but all was hushed, and the spectres melted into mist and vapour, when the anxiety of the spectators induced them to approach too near. The Tyrolese, nay, the Bavarian sentinels themselves, often beheld the Emperor's tower in the fortress of Kufstein surrounded with lambent fire; and the Austrian banners, wrapped in flames, were seen to wave at night over the towers of Sterzing. Withered arms appeared to stretch themselves from the rocks in the most secluded recesses of the mountains; vast armies of visionary soldiers, with banners flying, and all the splendour of military triumph, were seen at sunrise reflected in the lakes which lay on the Salzburg and Bavarian frontiers. When the widows and orphans of the fallen warriors knelt before the Virgin, the flowers and garlands placed round the image, according to the amiable custom of Catholic countries, and which had remained there till they had withered, burst forth in renovated beauty, and spread their fragrance around the altar, as if to mark the joy of the dead for the approaching deliverance of their country.¹

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1809.

¹ Personal
Observa-
tion. Barth.
Krieg von
1809, 474.
482. Gesch.
And. Hofer,
17, 32.

The most remarkable feature in the national character of the Tyrolese is their uniform piety, a principle which is nowhere more universally diffused than in their sequestered valleys. The most cursory view of the country is sufficient to demonstrate the strong hold which religion has taken of the minds of the peasantry. Chapels are built almost at every half mile, on the principal roads, in which the traveller may perform his devotions, or which may awaken his thoughts to a recollection of his spiritual duties. The rude efforts of art have there been exerted

11.
Powerful
religious
feelings of
the people.

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1809.

to portray the events of our Saviour's life; and innumerable figures, carved in wood, attest in every part of the country, both the uncultivated taste of the people and the fervour of their religious impressions. Even in the higher parts of the mountains, where hardly any vestiges of human cultivation are to be found, in the depths of untrodden forests, or on the summit of seemingly inaccessible cliffs, the symbols of devotion are to be found, and the cross rises everywhere amidst the wilderness, as if to mark the triumph of religion over the greatest obstacles of nature. Nor is it only in the solitudes or deserts that the proofs of their devotion are to be found. In the valleys and in the cities it still preserves its ancient sway over the people. On the exterior of most houses, the legend of some favourite saint, or the sufferings of some popular martyr, are delineated; and the inhabitant deems himself secure from the greater evils of life under such heavenly guardianship. In every valley numerous spires are to be seen, rising amidst the beauty of the surrounding scene, and reminding the traveller on the eastern frontier and in the Styrian fields, by the cupola-form in which they are constructed, of his approach to the regions of the East. On Sunday, the whole people flock to church in their neatest and gayest attire; and so great is the number who thus frequent these places of worship, that it is not uncommon to see the peasants kneeling on the turf in the churchyard while mass is performed, from being unable to find a place within the walls. Regularly in the evening, prayers are read in every family; and the traveller who passes through the villages at the hour of twilight, often sees through their latticed windows the young and the old kneeling together round their humble fire, or is warned of his approach to human habitation by hearing their hymns stealing through the silence and solitude of the forest.¹

¹ Personal observation.
Barth.
Krieg du
Tyroler
Landleute,
64, 72.

Nor has their religion become corrupted by many of

the errors which, in more advanced stages of civilisation, have dimmed the light or perverted the usefulness of the Catholic church. Mingled, indeed, with a large intermixture of superstition, and interwoven as it is with innumerable legends and visionary tales, it yet preserves enough of the pure spirit of its divine origin to influence, in a great degree, the conduct of their private lives. The Tyrolese have not yet learned that immorality in private may be absolved by ceremony in public, or that the profession of faith can win a dispensation from the rules of obedience. The purchase of absolution by money is almost unknown among them; and absolution is never conferred, unless application for it is accompanied, according to the true Catholic principle, by the profession at least of genuine repentance. In no part of the world are the domestic or conjugal duties more strictly or faithfully performed: "Nec corrumpere et corrumpi seculum vocatur."¹* In none do the parish priests exercise a stricter or more conscientious control over the conduct of their flocks. Their influence is not weakened, as in a more advanced state of society, by a discordance of religious tenets; nor is the consideration due to their sacred function lost in the homage paid to rank, opulence, or power. Placed in the midst of a people who acknowledge no superiors, and who live almost universally on the produce of their little domains; strangers alike to the arts of luxury and the seductions of fashion, the parish priests are equally removed from temptation themselves, and relieved from the necessity of guarding against the great sources of wickedness in others. Each pastor is at once the priest and the judge of his parishioners, the infallible criterion in matters of faith, and the general umpire in the occasional disputes which occur among them. Hence has arisen that remarkable veneration for their spiritual guides by which the peasantry are distinguished;² and it is to this cause that we are to ascribe the fact, common

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1809.

12.

Practical
utility of
the priests.

¹ Tacitus, de
Mor. Germ.

² Personal
observation.
Barth.
Krieg von
1809, 24,
31.

* "Nor to corrupt and be corrupted is called the manners of the age."

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LVIII.

1809.

13.
Remarkable
difference
in this re-
spect of
ancient and
modern
times.

to the Tyrol with la Vendée, that the people followed with alacrity the call of their pastors to take up arms in behalf of their religion and ancient princes.

In ancient times the Alps were inhabited by fierce and barbarous tribes—and the classical writers have exhausted their eloquence in painting the horrors of the climate and the savage manners of the inhabitants of those unexplored regions.* Often the Roman legions were impeded in their progress, sometimes thinned in their numbers, by these fierce barbarians ; and even after the mountaineers of the Rhætian Alps had been reduced to subjection by the expedition of Drusus, it was still esteemed a service of the utmost danger to deviate from the highways, and even an affair of considerable peril to traverse the passes by the great roads themselves. Almost all the inscriptions on the votive offerings which have been discovered in such numbers around the ruins of the temple of Jupiter Penninus, on the Great St Bernard, and which come down to the latest periods of the empire, are filled with warm expressions of gratitude for having escaped the extraordinary *perils* of the passage. Hence the singular fact, almost incredible in modern times, that even in the days of Pliny, several hundred years after the first passage of the Alps by the Roman troops, the sources both of the Rhine and the Isar were unknown ; and that the naturalist of Rome was content to state, a century subsequent to the establishment of a Roman station at Sion in the Valais, that “the Rhine took its rise in the most hidden parts of the earth, in the region of perpetual night, amidst forests for ever inaccessible to human approach.” Few attempts appear to have been made by any of the Romans in later times to explore the remoter recesses of the mountains, now so familiar to every traveller ; none to reclaim or humanise their inhabitants ;

* “Nivesque cœlo prope immixtæ, tecta informia imposita rupibus, pecora jumentaque torrida frigore, homines intousi et inculti, animalia inanimaque omnia rigentia gelu ; cætera visu, quam dictu, fœdiora, terrorem renovârunt.”—LIVY, lib. xxi.

their reduction, even by the legions, is enumerated with pride, as one of the greatest exploits of the Emperors.¹ Magnificent highways, constructed across their summits, connected Italy with the northern provinces of the empire; but they suffered the valleys on either side to remain in their pristine state of barbarism, and the Roman colonists hastened into more distant regions to spread that cultivation of which the Alps, with their rude inhabitants, seemed to them incapable. This inability to civilise a vast amphitheatre of mountains in the heart of their empire, would appear inconceivable in so great a people as the Romans, did we not perceive the counterpart of it in the present condition of the Caucasian range, the inhabitants of which maintain a savage independence in the midst of all the civilisation and power of the Russian empire, and the predatory habits of whom are sufficiently evinced by their proverbial expressions, notwithstanding all the efforts of modern enthusiasm or credulity to represent them in more interesting colours.*

What is it, then, which has wrought so surprising a change in the manners and habits of the inhabitants in Europe of the great mountain girdle of the earth? What is it which has spread cultivation through wastes deemed in ancient times inaccessible to improvement, and humanised the manners of a people remarkable only, under the Roman sway, for the ferocity and barbarism of their customs? What but the influence of religion; of that faith which has calmed the savage passions of the human mind, and spread its beneficial influence among

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1809.
1 Plin. iii.
24.

14.
Influence of
religion in
producing
the Tyrolean
character.

* See SPENCER'S *Circassia*, *passim*. The eloquent author of these interesting travels has given a glowing account of the virtues and character of the tribes who dwell in the recesses of the Caucasus; but it is evident, even from what he says, that they are nothing better than gallant robbers. The common expression which, he tells us, is used by a Circassian maiden of a lover whom she despises, "Him! he has never yet stole a Tchernemorsky cow," speaks volumes as to the real character of this people, and corroborates the unfavourable picture of their customs drawn by a much more experienced and judicious observer, Clarke, who describes them as a nest of freebooters. "The Circassians are almost all robbers by profession. The descriptions given of the

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the remotest habitations of men, and which prompted its disciples to leave the luxuries and comforts of southern civilisation to diffuse knowledge and humanity through inhospitable realms, and spread, even amidst the regions of desolation, the light of knowledge and the blessings of Christianity? Impressed with these ideas, the traveller, in crossing the St Bernard, and comparing the perfect safety with which he can now explore the most solitary parts of these mountains, with the perils of the passage as attested by the votive offerings even in the days of Adrian and the Antonines, will think with gratitude of the religion by which this wonderful change has been effected, and with veneration of the saint whose name has for a thousand years been affixed to the pass where his influence first reclaimed the people from their barbarous life; and in crossing the defile of Mount Brenner, where the abbey of Wilten first offered an asylum to the pilgrim, he will feel with a late amiable and eloquent writer, "how fortunate it is that religion has penetrated these fastnesses, impervious to human power, and, where precautions are impossible and resistance useless, spreads her invisible ægis over the traveller, and conducts him secure under her protection through all the dangers of his way. When in such situations he reflects upon his security, and recollects that these mountains, so savage and so well adapted to the purposes of murderers and banditti, have not in the memory of man been stained with human blood, he ought to do justice to the cause, and gratefully to acknowledge the influence of religion. Impressed with these ideas, he will behold with indulgence, perhaps even with interest, the crosses which frequently mark the brow of a precipice, and the little

natives in the South Seas do not present human nature in a more savage state than its condition exhibits among the Caucasians. Instructed from their infancy to consider war and plunder not only as a necessary but an honourable occupation, they bear in their countenances the most striking expressions of ferocious valour and of duplicity."—See CLARKE'S *Travels*, chap. 1, vol. ii. 34, 35.

chapels hollowed out of the rock where the road is narrowed ; he will consider them as so many pledges of security, and rest assured that so long as the pious mountaineer continues to adore the ‘good Shepherd,’ and to implore the prayer of the afflicted Mother, he will never cease to befriend the traveller nor to discharge the duties of hospitality.”¹*

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LVIII.

1809.

¹ Eustace’s
Travels,
i. 98.

Though inhabiting the same mountain range, and under the influence of the same climate as the Swiss, the Tyrolese are distinguished by a totally different national character ; a striking example of the undying influence of that difference of race which appears to stamp indelible features on the remotest generations of men. Both have the usual qualities of mountaineers—a bold and intrepid character, a frame fitted to endure toil, a soul capable of despising danger ; both are distinguished by their uniform and enthusiastic love of freedom, and both have been celebrated in every age for their heroic and martial exploits. But, nevertheless, the fundamental principles of their life are different. The Tyrolese is animated with an ardent and enthusiastic loyalty ; attachment to the house of Austria has ever distinguished him ; he mingles prayers for his beloved Kaiser with his supplications for his family and his country. The Swiss, nursed in republican ideas, abhors the very name or emblems of royalty. The Tyrolese is ardent, impetuous, sometimes inconsiderate ; the Swiss grave, reflecting, always tenacious. The former seldom quits his native valleys for foreign service, and has never sold his blood in mercenary bands ; the latter is to be found in the remotest countries of Europe, and has in every age lent out his valour for foreign gold.² Patriotic devotion strongly animates both ; but in the

15.
National
character of
the Tyrolese
compared
with that of
the Swiss.

² Personal
observation.

* It is to the unceasing efforts of the clergy, during the many centuries that elapsed between the fall of the Roman empire and the revival of knowledge, that the judicious historian of Switzerland ascribes the early civilisation and humane disposition in modern times of the Helvetic tribes ; and invariably the first traces of order and industry appeared in the immediate neighbourhood of the religious establishments.—See PLANTA’S *Switzerland*, i. 17, *et seq.*

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16.
Love of
freedom
which ani-
mates the
people.
Their cha-
racter and
manners.

Tyrolese it is dignified by disinterested attachment to the throne ; in the Swiss, somewhat dimmed by its union with the thirst for individual aggrandisement.

Notwithstanding, however, the long-established and hereditary loyalty of the Tyrolese, there is no part of Europe where the love of freedom is more strongly felt, or its practical blessings have been more uninterruptedly enjoyed. In every part of the country, the bold and martial air of the peasantry, their athletic form and fearless eye, bespeak the liberty and independence which they enjoy. Often the people carry arms, universally they possess them ; on Sundays or holidays they usually appear with costly weapons in their belts or slung over their shoulders, as a mark at once of their wealth and privileges. The frequent exercise of the chase, and the universal practice of firing at targets and serving in the militia or trained bands, have given them great proficiency in the use of firearms—of which the French and Bavarians, in the course of the war, had ample experience. It was in a great degree in consequence of the extraordinary perfection of the Tyrolese marksmen, that the inhabitants of the province, with little aid from the Austrian armies, were enabled for so long a period to make head against the united forces of France and Bavaria. Their dress is singularly calculated to add to this impression. That of the men consists, in general, of a broad-brimmed hat, sometimes ornamented with a feather ; a jacket, tight to the shape, but generally worn open, and exhibiting a red or green waistcoat ; a broad girdle, richly ornamented, fastened in front by a large buckle of costly workmanship ; embossed braces worn over the waistcoat, and supporting tight breeches, which, with gaiters up to the knee, are invariably made of black leather. The colours of the attire, especially about the breast, are brilliant and varied, and, with the pistols or knife stuck in the girdle, bespeak a degree of opulence rarely to be met with in the actual cultivators of any other country.

But everything about them indicates general and long-established wellbeing, and demonstrates that the opulence which industry had won has been fearlessly and habitually displayed by the possessors. They are courteous and hospitable in their manner towards strangers; but they expect a similar treatment from these; and in no country of Europe is an insult more likely to be avenged, or is the peasant more ready to redress with his own hands any wrong, whether real or imaginary, which he may have received. Honest, sincere, and brave, the people are yet warm in their temperament; and acknowledging no superiors, and being but little habituated to gradation of rank, they expect to be treated on all occasions on the footing of respect and equality. But if this is done, in no part of the world will the foreigner experience a more courteous reception, or can he repose with more perfect security on the honesty and fidelity of the inhabitants.¹

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1809.

¹ Malte-
Brun, vii.
516. Per-
sonal obser-
vation.
Inglist's
Tyrol, i.
162, 164.

The two circumstances which have mainly contributed to nourish these independent and manly feelings in the Tyrolese peasantry, are the practical freedom of their government, and the circumstance of their being, in general, proprietors of the lands which they cultivate. Though forming part of a despotic monarchy, ever since the acquisition of their province by Austria in 1363, the Tyrolese have uniformly been in the practical possession of all the blessings of freedom; and from the earliest times they have enjoyed the two grand privileges of voting for representative assemblies, and not being taxed without their own consent.* Impressed with the bold and impetuous character of these fearless mountaineers, as well as the vast importance, in a military point of

17.
Practical
freedom
which the
people have
always en-
joyed under
the Austrian
govern-
ment.

* In the Tyrol, as in Sweden, the four orders of nobles, clergy, burghers, and *peasants*, met in a general convocation at Innspruck, where the president was chosen by the suffrages of the united body. The Bishops of Trent and Brixen were usually elected alternately for that situation. In these assemblies, all matters relative to taxation, as well as the calling out of the militia, were settled; and in order to facilitate the latter, a sort of conscription was established, and

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view, of their country to the defence of the Hereditary States, the Austrians not only never made any attempt to infringe their privileges, but treated the inhabitants with such lenity that they knew government only by the protection and benefits which it afforded. The taxes were so light as to be almost imperceptible ; civil appointments were almost all filled by natives ; municipal officers elected by the people ; customhouse restraints were hardly felt ; the conscription was unknown. Four battalions of light-armed troops were all that was required by government from the province, though it contained seven hundred thousand souls—a requisition rather felt as a privilege than a burden, as it afforded a vent to their numerous and warlike youth. The military service was extremely popular, and these regiments were always filled up by volunteers. But the whole male inhabitants were enrolled in the militia, and regularly instructed in ball-practice and the rudiments of the military art. Twenty thousand men, capable of being augmented to double that force in case of need, were at all times ready to defend their mountains, and often, by their hardihood and valour, rendered essential service to the monarchy in the most critical periods of its history.¹

¹ Malte-Brun, vii. 516, 517. *Gesch. And.* Hofer, 14, 15. Barth. 64, 72.

18.
The peasants are all owners of their land. Great influence of this on their character.

In the German Tyrol, the peasantry are almost all owners of the land they cultivate ; a state of things of all others the most favourable to social happiness, when not brought about by the spoliation of others, and accompanied by a tolerable administration of government. It is much less so on the Italian side of the mountains : there, great proprietors, with their attendant evils of non-resident gentry and resident middlemen, are to be found. Hence, in a great degree, as well as in the original difference of race, the wide distinction between

the days of service, being in general forty-two, were fixed upon. These days were a period of festivity and recreation to the youth upon whom the lot fell. To the latest times, previous to the cession of the province to Bavaria in 1805, these privileges had been religiously observed by the Austrian government.—MULLER'S *Gesch.* ii. 27, 29.

these two great divisions of the country in the character and independence of the people. Their look, their customs, their character, are essentially distinct. In the German Tyrol are to be seen a national dress, primitive usages, early hours, independent character, intrepid resolution ; in the Italian, polished manners, harmonious accent, opulent cities, selfish craft, enervating luxury. The line between the two, however, is not to be drawn merely according to the flow of the waters into the Danube or the Po ; the German population has overpassed the crest of the mountains, and come far down towards the Italian plains ; all the valleys of the Adige and the Eisach above Bolsano are inhabited by the northern brood, who, with the harsh language and fair hair, have preserved the virtues and customs of their fathers. The population of German is nearly four times that of Italian descent ; and in all struggles for freedom and independence, though the latter has not been wanting in energetic characters, the weight of the contest has fallen upon the Gothic race.¹

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1809.

¹ Malte-
Brun, vii.
550. Inglis,
i. 164, 167.
Personal
observation.

To complete the picture of this highly interesting people, it is only necessary to observe, that they are all frugal and industrious, that domestic manufactures are to be found in many of their cottages, and valuable salt-mines at Hall, on the lower Inn ; but that the great reliance of the people is on the resources of agriculture. The wonderful effect of a general diffusion of property, in stimulating the efforts of individual industry, is nowhere more conspicuous. The grass which grows on the sides of declivities too steep for pasture is carefully cut for the cattle ; the atmospheric action on rocks is rendered serviceable by conveying their debris to cultivated fields ; and the stranger sometimes observes with astonishment a Tyrolese peasant, with a basket in his hand, descending inaccessible cliffs, by means of a rope, in order that he may gain a few feet of land at the bottom, and devote it to agriculture. All the family labour at the little paternal

19.
Astonishing
industry of
the people.

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LVIII.

1809.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 21.
Malte-Brun,
vii. 514,
515. Barth.
Krieg von
1809, 74,
78.

estate: the daughters tend the cows, or bring in the grass; the sons work with the father in the field, or carry on some species of manufacture within doors. Notwithstanding this universal industry, however, the country is too sterile to maintain, from its own resources, its numerous inhabitants. A large proportion of it is covered with forest, a still larger is desert rock or snow, tenanted only by the chamois and the marmot; and a considerable portion of the people are yearly induced to seek the means of bettering their condition in neighbouring and richer countries, from whence such of them as prosper return, after many years of absence, to purchase a little domain in their beloved valleys.¹

20.
Mechanical
contrivances
in the Tyrol.

The Tyrolese are of a singularly mechanical turn. Necessity has driven them to the useful arts as a means of supplying the deficiencies of nature; and the numerous mountain streams and cascades, with which the country abounds, afford ample opportunity of obtaining, at no expense, an external power capable of setting in motion their simple machinery. Conducted into the fields, the houses, and mills, by little wooden troughs, in the course of their precipitous descent, the mountain torrents perform the most important functions of domestic economy. The irrigation of meadows, the grinding of corn, the making of oil, the fabrication of tools, are all performed by these streams, or the mills which they set in motion.^{2*} In many places each peasant has his mill, which is applied to almost every purpose of life—even the rocking of a cradle

² Malte-
Brun, vii.
549-551.

* The following are some of the more important statistical facts connected with the population of the Tyrol, viz:—

Inhabitants, . . .	762,000	Elementary schools, . .	735
German race, . . .	598,580	Do., endowed by government, .	15
Italian race, . . .	163,420	Meadows, . (Acres.)	320,000
Cows, . . .	131,000	Fields, . . do.	152,000
Sheep, . . .	137,000	Vineyards, . . do.	1,700
Oxen, . . .	44,000	Forests, . . do.	1,508,600
Goats, . . .	63,000	Rock and waste, do.	2,906,700

The people are all Roman Catholics. The largeness of the proportion of the country in forest and rock is very remarkable, and sufficiently explains its romantic character.—See MALTE-BRUN, vii. 549, 551.

is sometimes performed by means of a water-wheel. Nor are the most minute arts overlooked by this industrious people ; and numbers of families earn a not contemptible livelihood by rearing canary birds, which are sold in all the cities of Europe.

To a people of such a character, and enjoying such advantages under the paternal government of their ancient princes, their forcible transference to the rule of Bavaria, by the treaty of Presburg, had been the subject of inextinguishable aversion. The cabinet of Munich, little acquainted with the character of the inhabitants, ignorant of the delicacy requisite in the management of free-born mountaineers, and relying on the powerful military aid of France and the Rhenish confederacy, adopted the dangerous policy, without attempting to remedy their grievances, of coercing their discontents by force. Though all their privileges were solemnly guaranteed by Bavaria in the treaty of Presburg, 1805,* yet no sooner were the Bavarian authorities established in the country, than all these stipulations were basely violated. The court of Munich seemed intent only on making the utmost of their new acquisition, as if under a presentiment that their tenure of it was not destined to be of very long duration. The constitution, which had subsisted for ages, was overthrown by a royal edict : the representative estates were suppressed, and the provincial funds seized. No less than eight new and oppressive taxes were imposed, and levied with the utmost rigour ; the country, after the model of revolutionary France, was divided into the departments of the Inn, the Etch, and the Eisach ; the dramatised legends, which formed so large a part of the amusement of the people, were prohibited, all pilgrimages to chapels or places of extraordinary sanctity forbidden.

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LVI.

1809.

21.

Discontent
of the peo-
ple under
the Bava-
rian govern-
ment.

* "The above-mentioned countries (the Tyrol and Vorarlberg) shall be enjoyed by his Majesty the King of Bavaria in the same manner, and with *the same rights and prerogatives*, as the Emperor of Germany and Austria, and the princes of his house, enjoyed them, and *no otherwise*."—*Treaty of Presburg, Dec. 26, 1805, Art. 8 ; MARTEN'S Sup. iv. 215.*

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LVIII.

1809.

The convents and monasteries were confiscated, and their estates sold; the church plate and holy vessels melted down and disposed of; the royal property was all brought into the market; even the ancient castle of the Tyrol in the Passeyrthal was not spared. New imposts were daily exacted without any consultation with the estates of the people; specie became scarce, from the quantity of it which was drawn off to the royal treasury; the Austrian notes were reduced to half their value; and the feelings of the people were irritated almost to madness by the compulsory levy of men to serve in the ranks of their oppressors. It was even attempted to change the very name of the country, and incorporate it with the Bavarian provinces; and to the southern provinces the use of their mother tongue was only to be permitted for a few years.^{1*}

¹ Muller's
Gesch. 671.
Gesch. A.
Hofer, 17.
Intro.
Barth. 24,
32.

22.
Prepara-
tions of
Austria
to take
advantage
of this dis-
content.

The existence and wide diffusion of these discontents were well known to the Austrian government, by whom a constant correspondence with the disaffected leaders had been maintained in secret, ever since that valuable province had been reft from their dominion. Sensible of the immense error committed in 1805, in stripping the country of regular troops, at the very time when the advance of the French to Vienna rendered it of the last importance that this great natural fortress should be strengthened on their flank, the cabinet of Vienna resolved not to fall a second time into the same mistake, and make every preparation for turning to the best account the martial qualities and excited feelings of the people. The Archduke John, who commanded the army destined for the

* Beauharnais, by an order dated *Moscow*, September 24, 1812, only permitted to some of the southern districts the use of their mother tongue for six years longer.—*Quarterly Review*, xvii. 351. The date is singular and ominous. Napoleon afterwards was well aware how much the Tyrolese revolt was owing to the mismanagement of the Bavarians, and said to Count Bubna, "The Bavarians did not know how to govern the Tyrolese, and were unworthy to rule that noble country."—*Gesch. AND. HOFER*, 16. In truth, however, it was the magnitude and weight of his own exactions, in men and money, from that subject power, which drove the cabinet of Munich to the severe measures which had so powerful an effect in bringing about the insurrection.

Italian campaign, then stationed at Villach and Klagenfurth, had made frequent excursions in former years through the Tyrol; and in the course of his rambles had become as much attached to these spirited mountaineers as they had acquired confidence in his patriotism and ardour. An active correspondence was carried on between the Archduke and the Tyrolese leaders, from the moment that war had been resolved on by the cabinet of Vienna, till it actually broke out. But although that accomplished prince was thus in a great degree instrumental in producing the general insurrection in the province which afterwards took place, yet he was fated never to return to it till the contest was over, nor to take part in a struggle in which he would willingly have risked his fortune and his life.¹

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 19.
Inglis's
Tyrol, ii.
163, 164.
Barth, 52,
54.

The Tyrol, notwithstanding its rugged aspect, is, in a military or strategetical point of view, a very simple country. There are very few practicable roads. The great chain of mountains which forms the southern barrier of the valley of the Inn, and which, beginning with the snowy peaks of the Ortler-Spitz, stretches through the Gefron to the huge mass of the Gross Glockner, is traversed only by one road, which from time immemorial has formed the chief means of communication between Germany and Italy. Setting out from Munich, it surmounts the northern barrier of the Innthal by the gorge of Scharnitz; descends to Innspruck, and after crossing the southern bulwarks of the valley by the pass of the Brenner, follows the course of the Eisach to Sterzing, Brixen, Botzen, Trent, and Roveredo, below which it emerges at Verona into the Italian plains. From Trent branch two lateral roads: the first, after surmounting an inconsiderable ridge, descends by the waters of the Brenta, through the romantic defiles of the Val Sugano, to Primolano, and loses itself in the Italian plains at Bassano; the second, after crossing the river Sarco, winds down by Chiesa and the lake of Idro, to the Brescian

23.
Military
description
of the coun-
try.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

fields. From Botzen, or Bolsano, a great road ascends the whole course of the Adige, called, in its upper or German parts, the Etch, and penetrates into the cold and cheerless pastures of the Engadine, in Switzerland, at Nauders. From Brixen branches off the great road to Carinthia and Klagenfurth, through the Pusterthal and down the valley of the Drave; and this route communicates with Salzburg by a cross-road which surmounts the great central ridge by St Michel and Tauern, till it reaches Rastadt and the waters of the Salza. Another great road crosses the Tyrol in its whole breadth, along the valley of the Inn; communicating on the west with Switzerland by Feldkirch and Bregentz; on the east passing by Rattenberg to Salzburg, Enns, and Vienna. The Brenner is thus by far the most important position in Tyrol, because whoever has the command of it, is the master of the only communication from Germany and the northern, to Italy and the southern Tyrol, and of the bridge of Laditch, at the junction of roads leading to Innspruck, Carinthia, and Verona. Rude fortifications were erected on the principal passes leading into the province on all sides from the adjoining states; but they were of no great strength, and incapable of holding out against a numerous and enterprising enemy. The true defence of the Tyrol consisted in its rugged and inaccessible surface, which rendered it for the most part wholly impassable for cavalry; in the number of woods and defensible positions which it contains; and, above all, in the indomitable spirit and skill in arms of its inhabitants.¹

¹ Pel. iii.
375, 382;
and Personal
Observation.

24.
Hofer: his
birth and
descent.

When the peasantry of the Tyrol, at the summons of Austria, took up arms, they had no fixed or authorised leaders; but several persons had acquired such consideration among them as naturally placed them at the head of affairs. The first of these was ANDREW HOFER, a native of St Leonard, in the valley of Passeyr; a name, like that of Tell and Wallace, now become immortal in

the history of the world. Like his ancestors for many generations, he had hitherto carried on the business of an innkeeper on his paternal property on the banks of the Adige—a profession which is one of the most respectable among that simple people, from the intercourse with strangers and the wealth with which it is commonly attended. He was born on the 22d November 1767, so that he was in the forty-second year of his age when the insurrection broke out. His frame was herculean, his shoulders broad, his strength surpassing; but, like most persons long accustomed to climbing mountains, his carriage was somewhat impaired by a habitual stoop. In education, and the means of improvement, he had enjoyed advantages superior to those of most persons in his rank of life, from his frequent intercourse with travellers, as well as the traffic which he carried on in wine and horses, in the course of which he had visited most of the principal cities on the southern side of the mountains, and become a fluent master of the Italian language, though in the low Venetian dialect. His dress was the common habit of the country, with some trifling variations: a large black hat with a broad brim, black ribbons, and a dark curling feather, a green jacket, red waistcoat, green braces, black leathern girdle, short black breeches of the same material, and red or black stockings. About his neck was always to be seen a crucifix and a silver medal of St George, to which was afterwards added a gold medal and chain, sent him by the Emperor. He never, however, obtained any rank in the Austrian army, and was indebted for his influence among his countrymen to his well-known probity of character and disinterested disposition, and to the secret connexion which he maintained with the Archduke John, with whom he had formed an acquaintance in the course of that prince's scientific rambles in the Tyrol. This acquaintance led to his being chosen as a deputy from his native valley to confer with him at Brunn-
ecken, in November 1805, and Vienna in January 1809.¹

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 44,
52. Baith.
42, 45.

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1809.

25.

His charac-
ter and dis-
position.

His talents and acquirements were of a superior order, as was sufficiently evinced by his having been selected by that discerning prince on occasions of such importance for the discharge of difficult duties ; but his parts were solid rather than brilliant, and he evinced, in its merits equally as its defects, the true German character. Honest, sincere, and confiding, tenacious of custom, attached to antiquity, ignorant of present times, benevolent in disposition, he was at the same time pious and patriotic, and ready to lay down the last drop of his blood in defence of his religion and Emperor. It was easy to excite him to severe measures ; but when their execution commenced, he was readily diverted from his purpose, and his native gentleness of disposition speedily caused the sterner mood to relent. His attachment to the Catholic faith, and patriotic ardour, were unbounded ; and the bare recital of a victory gained by Austria in former times, or allusion to the classical days of the Tyrol, a word in favour of the sacred person of the Emperor or the Archduke John, were sufficient to fill his eyes with tears. Though slow and sometimes vacillating in decision, he was capable, when he applied to a subject, of just discrimination ; and when invested, during a few months in autumn 1809, with the entire government of the province, his measures were judicious to a degree that could hardly have been expected from his limited means of information. Fond of conviviality, sometimes addicted to intemperance, he was often carousing with his friends when the troops were engaged in action ; and, though repeatedly victorious, and fearless in danger, he was only once under a hot fire during the war, though then he acted with the utmost gallantry. But his energy in conduct, and well-known patriotic ardour, obtained for him the attachment of his countrymen, whom he constantly led to victory ; and the intrepidity of his demeanour in his last moments has secured for him an enduring place in the hearts of his countrymen.¹

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 44,
52, 53.
Barth. 42,
47. Inglis,
ii. 165, 166.

Inferior to Hofer in general government, and unversed in the practice of political negotiation, SPECHBACHER was greatly his superior in the energy and conduct of actual warfare. He was a substantial yeoman, having inherited from his father a farm of some value in the village of Gnadenwald, in the Lower Innthal. Born in the year 1768, he was left an orphan at the age of seven years; and though his relations bestowed all the care upon his education which circumstances would admit, he showed little disposition for study, or any sedentary pursuit. From an early age he was found from morning till night among the mountains, with his rifle over his shoulder, pursuing the roe or engaging the lammergeyer. As he advanced in years, these pursuits had such attractions for him, that, abandoning altogether his paternal estate, he associated with a band of hunters, who set the forest-laws at defiance, and ranged the mountains of the Upper and Lower Innthal, the Oetzthal, and the rugged forests of the Bavarian Tyrol. By this wandering mode of life, as he afterwards himself admitted, he became acquainted with every pass and glen on the frontiers of the Tyrol and Bavaria, from Feldkirch to Kufstein—a species of knowledge which was of essential importance in the conduct of the partisan warfare with which he was afterwards intrusted. At the same time it nourished in his mind that inextinguishable hatred towards Bavaria, which is felt more or less by every inhabitant of the northern Tyrol. His grandfather had distinguished himself in the war against the Bavarians, under Maximilian Emmanuel; “and when I was a child,” said Spechbacher in after days, “and listened to him as he told us the story of those times, I longed to have an opportunity of fighting against them as he had done.” He was diverted, however, from this dangerous course of life, by the impression produced by seeing one of his companions shot in a rencontre with a band of chasseurs; and returning at the age of twenty-eight to his native village, he married a young woman with some property, entered

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26.
Of Spech-
bacher.

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¹ Barth. 36,
42. Inglis,
ii. 179, 180.

27.

Of Joseph
Haspinger,
the friar.

into a contract to supply the salt-works of Hall with wood, made himself master of the elements of education, and continued for twelve years to lead a laborious, inoffensive life, till the trumpet of war from Austria roused him to danger, and glory, and immortality.¹

JOSEPH HASPINGER was a Capuchin friar, and buried in the seclusion of a monastery, till the war broke out. Though reckoned with justice one of the most formidable of the Tyrolese leaders, he carried with him into the field of battle only the spiritual weapons which he brought from the cloister. Clothed in his brown garment and rope-girdle, he bore in his hand a large ebony crucifix, with which, it is said, in close combat, he sometimes exchanged blows with the enemy; and being endowed with prodigious strength, nearly as many wonders are recounted of his personal feats as of miracles won by his faith and devotion. When a student in the faculty of theology, he had borne arms against the French, and won a silver medal, which he consecrated, on entering the order of St Francis, to the miraculous crucifix at Eppen near Bolsano. He was distinguished by a flowing beard of a red colour, which gained him the surname of *Rothbard*: and often the massy crucifix and animated voice of the friar restored the combat, when his countrymen were sinking under numbers or fatigue.²

² Barth. i.
52, 54.
Inglis, ii.
180, 181.

28.

Of Martin
Teimer, and
Baron Hor-
mayer.

MARTIN TEIMER, though a brave and active leader, was not so celebrated as the other chiefs among the peasantry; but, from his military talents, skill in negotiation, and a certain degree of aristocratic favour which it induced, he received marks of distinction from the Emperor which the others never enjoyed, and was made a baron, with the cross of Maria Theresa, a dignity to which Hofer never attained. Teimer, however, was Hofer's superior in conduct and understanding, though, from not being so great a favourite with the people, he never possessed the same influence or celebrity. He was born on the 14th August 1778, at Schlanders, in the Vintschgau, and had

a countenance in which the prominent forehead and sparkling eye clearly indicated the ascendant of talent. He served in the militia in the war of 1796, and raised himself by his abilities from the ranks to the station of major; having distinguished himself in several actions under Laudon in that year, and Bellegarde in 1799. In 1805, he was again made captain in the militia, and subsequently kept a shop at Klagenfurth. Like Hofer, his disposition was phlegmatic, and he was fond of conviviality; but, when roused by danger and placed at the head of his troops, he displayed equal courage and capacity, and contributed with the peasants of the Upper Innthal, whom he commanded, to some of the greatest successes of the war. It was only unfortunate that the favour of the Emperor occasioned a certain jealousy between him and Hofer, which in some degree dimmed the glory and impaired the usefulness of both. Baron Hormayer, one of the few native nobility who appeared in arms for their country, was early appointed by the Austrian cabinet governor of the province; and he showed his judgment by delegating his authority at a very early period to Hofer, by whom the movements of the peasants were practically directed till the close of the contest.¹

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

¹ Barth. i.
82, 84.
Inglis, ii.
181. Gesch.
A. Hofer,
59, 60.

Such were the simple leaders under whose guidance the Tyrolese engaged in the formidable contest with the united power of France and Bavaria. It was from no ignorance of the perils which awaited them, but a brave determination to disregard them, that they stood forth with such unanimous gallantry for their country's deliverance. In former wars, they had both witnessed and felt the weight of the French arms: in 1796, they had seen it roll past them in the Italian, in 1805, on the Bavarian plains; in 1797, their valleys had been penetrated from the south by Joubert,* in 1805, invaded from the north by Marshal Ney;† and they were well aware that the probabilities were, that if a serious reverse happened to the Imperial

29.
Brave preparations of
the people
for the con-
test.

* *Ante*, Chap. XXIII. § 15.† *Ante*, Chap. XL. § 89.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

arms, the forces of the empire would, as on former occasions, be concentrated for the defence of the capital, and they would be left without external aid to make head against their numerous and disciplined enemies. Still they unanimously stood forth in the contest. Every man took leave of his family and his friends as if they might never meet again. They prepared themselves, after the manner of their country, for what they deemed a pious warfare, by the most solemn rites of their religion. The priest, in many parishes, assembled those who were to join the army, and animated them by his exhortations, and blessed those who might die in defence of their country. Every family assembled together, and prayed that the youths who were to leave it, might support their good name in the hour of danger, and die rather than dishonour their native land. In many instances even the sacrament was administered as for the last time in life, and accompanied with the solemnities which the Romish Church enjoins for the welfare of a departing soul. It was with such holy rites, and by such exercises of family devotion, that these brave men prepared themselves for the fearful warfare on which they were entering; and it was the spirit which they thus inhaled that supported them when they were left to their own resources, and enabled them, even amidst all the depression arising from the desertion of their allies, to present an undaunted front to the hostility of an overpowering foe.¹

¹ Personal information. Barth. 86, 90.

30.
Insurrection in the Tyrol.

All things being in readiness, and the Austrian troops under the Archduke Charles having crossed the Inn, the signal of insurrection was given by the Archduke John, in a spirited proclamation, from his headquarters at Klagenfurth, from whence the Marquis Chastellar set out to take the command of the regular troops, which were to enter the province to direct and support the operations of the peasants.* So unanimous, however, was the feeling

* The following proclamation was issued by the Archduke John:—"Tyrolese! I am come to keep the promise which I made to you on 4th November 1805,

with which the country was animated, that at the first intelligence of hostilities having commenced, the insurrection burst forth at once with uncontrollable fury in all quarters. The night of the 8th April was fixed for the event on which the destinies of the Tyrol were to depend. The signal agreed on was throwing sawdust into the Inn, which floated down, and was soon discovered and understood by the peasants. In addition to this, a plank with a little pennon affixed to it was launched in the Upper Innthal, and safely borne down the stream, amidst the throbbing anxieties of all who witnessed it. Bale-fires at the same time were lighted on a hundred hills; and many a ruined castle blazed with a long-unwonted glow. The peasantry of the Innthal were warned, besides, by women and children, who carried from house to house little balls of paper, upon which were written the words "*Es ist Zeit*,"—It is time. Roused by these various methods, the inhabitants everywhere rose on the 8th April as one man, and with their redoubted rifles on their shoulders descended every lateral glen and ravine, till their accumulated force, gaining strength at every step as it advanced, rolled in an impetuous torrent down the great valleys of the Inn, the Eisach, and the Adige.¹

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

April 8.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 77,
80. Inglis.
ii. 168, 169.
Barth. 82,
84.

Marquis Chastellar, with the regular troops under his command, about ten thousand strong, but very deficient in cavalry, was on the Klagenfurth frontier, to take advantage of and support these enthusiastic movements, and crossed the frontier at daybreak on the 9th. Their progress through the Pusterthal resembled rather the triumph of a victorious, than the march of an invading army. Mothers brought their children out to look at them; blind old men were lead out of their cottages that they might hear and bless their gallant countrymen; all endeavoured to get near, that they might touch their

31.
First suc-
cesses in the
Pusterthal.

that the time would certainly come when I should have the joy of again finding myself among you. The peace of Presburg was the cause of all your subsequent

CHAP.
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1809.

April 9.

clothes, or even kiss their horses. But more serious occupation awaited them. On arriving in the neighbourhood of St Lorenzen, in their way down towards Brixen, they found the peasants in considerable numbers already engaged with the enemy. The rising there had been precipitated two days before the time agreed on, by an attempt of the Bavarians on the important bridge at that place, which commanded the communication between Brunecken and the upper part of the valley. The peasants rose to prevent its destruction; and Wrede, aware of the importance of suppressing such a revolt in the outset, immediately marched to the spot, with two thousand men and three guns, from Brixen. With these, however, he made no impression on the assembled peasants stationed in the woods and rocks; but being joined on the day following by a reinforcement of a thousand foot-soldiers and six hundred horse, he renewed his attack with better success; and the Tyrolese, unable to block

April 10.

disasters; it broke the tie which had connected Austria with the Tyrol for five hundred years; but even then the father of your country recollected his beloved children. He stipulated that the Tyrol should remain undivided, retain all its rights and liberties; in a word, 'that, in the same manner, and with the same rights and titles with which the Emperor had possessed it, it should be made over to Bavaria, and not otherwise.' The King of Bavaria solemnly promised to your deputies, 'that not an iota of the constitution should be changed;' that he honoured the grief which the Tyrolese felt for their ancient masters; but that he hoped, by constant care and attention, to make himself equally regretted by them. By the royal proclamation, 14th January 1806, it was declared, 'that the Tyrolese should not only retain their ancient rights and liberties, but their welfare should be promoted in every possible manner.' Where has been the promised attention to your interests—where the regard to the constitution you have so bravely defended? The clergy were their first object of attack: this was their plan, because they were the intrepid defenders of the throne and the altar. With bitter feelings, the Tyrolese beheld their abbeys and monasteries destroyed, the property of the churches stolen and carried away, their bishops and priests exiled, their churches profaned, their chalices sold to the Jews. Your knights and nobles, who, before the institution of the tributary law, were all your equals, and never a burden to the country, are all destroyed—your cities and courts of justice are ruined—your sons or brothers hurried away by a cruel conscription to fight the battles of the oppressor against Austria, their lawful master, or Spain, or Russia. The Bavarians have refused the bank-bills of the Austrians in payment; and when this occasioned to every man the loss of half his property, they overburdened the remainder with such oppressive taxes that it has reduced many landholders to the rank of day-labourers. Even the name of your country is taken from

up the main road against such formidable odds, were beginning to give way, when the arrival of seventy light horse, and a few companies of chasseurs, the advanced guard of Chastellar, who instantly charged with loud shouts, changed the face of the day. The Tyrolese, suspending the combat, fell on their knees to return thanks, or embraced the Austrians with tears of joy; while the Bavarians, thunderstruck at this unexpected apparition, fled in disorder down the valley, and when they arrived at the tremendous bridge of Laditch,* broke into two divisions, the first of which, under Bisson, hotly pursued by the peasants, ascended the Eisach towards Sterzing and the Brenner; while the second, two thousand strong, under General Lemoine, followed the course of that river down to Bolsano. Here, however, they were met by the land-sturm, or *levée en masse*, of the valley of the Adige, which had descended to that place in great strength, from the upper part of the Etschthal;¹ and though some forced

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¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 79,
81. Barth.
92, 96. Pel.
iii. 86, 87.

you, and your valleys are called after the unmeaning names of rivers! To arms!—Rise, Tyrolese! to arms, for your God, your Emperor, your country! Why is the war a holy one?—why is it necessary and general? Because so great a power cannot be opposed alone, and therefore every one should assist in the cause: because the restoration of rights and liberties is to be gained, if attempted: because neither Germans nor Bohemians ought to be obliged to sell their blood as the blind instruments of an insatiable power—to be forced against their will to invade Russia or Spain, or oppress the less powerful kingdoms of the world. We have an enemy to oppose, whom hitherto nothing has been able to oppose: but, with unanimity, ardour, and firm perseverance, nothing is impossible. We possess this firmness and courage; this unanimity warms every heart. Austria has gone through many dangers, and emerged from them victorious. The present is the greatest of them all, but there never was the same unanimity. In a moment of such consequence to our faithful country, in the midst of such ardour for the holiest cause for which sword was ever drawn, I plant the Austrian eagle on the soil of the Tyrol. I know you—I recall you, as Duke Ferdinand did, nine hundred and thirty-three years ago—the prelates, the nobles, the citizens, the peasants—to the foot of the throne. Arms, and courage, to restore the rights you desire. Recollect the glorious days when you defeated Joubert at Spinger, Jenisir, and Botzen. I am no stranger to your mountains and valleys. I am confident you will fulfil the hopes of your fathers, and our highest expectations.—ARCHDUKE JOHN.”—See *Gesch. A. HOFER*, 64, 76.

* A well-known bridge, composed of a single arch between tremendous rocks, at the point where the roads from Innsbruck over the Brenner, from Carinthia by the Pusterthal, and from Italy up the Eisach, unite.—*Gesch. A. HOFER*, p. 64, 78; and *Personal Observation*.

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32.

Defeat of
the Bava-
rians by
Hofer at the
Sterzinger
Moos.
April 10.

their way through to Trent, the greater part, with the general himself, were made prisoners.

While these events were going on below Brixen, the Bavarian regiments which had ascended to Sterzing encountered Hofer with the landsturm of the Passeyrthal and the Vintschgau, on the plain of the Sterzinger Moos, near the town and castle of that name. The Bavarians advanced in good order, and with an intrepid air, over the open ground which lay between them and the enemy; but as they approached the Tyrolese, who were posted on rocks and in thickets around its outer circumference, they were staggered by the close and deadly fire of the rifles, and fell back in confusion. The guns were next brought up, but they could produce little impression upon the enemy scattered among, and in great part concealed in, the broken ground and woods; and the gunners were soon laid prostrate by the unerring aim of the mountain sharpshooters. Encouraged by this success, the Tyrolese now burst from their covert, and rushing forward, like the Vendean peasants, in loose array, but with desperate resolution, using their spears, halberts, and the but-ends of their muskets, fell with loud shouts upon the enemy. After a violent struggle of a few minutes' duration the Bavarians gave way, and, being enveloped on all sides, laid down their arms to the number of three hundred and ninety, besides two hundred and forty who were killed or wounded in this sanguinary combat. The column which succeeded, however, under Bisson and Wrede, contrived to force its way, by a circuitous route, up the pass of the Brenner; but it was grievously harassed in the defile of Lueg by the peasants, who broke down bridges and barricaded the highway by heaps of trees thrown across the road, and only penetrated through to the neighbourhood of Innspruck after sustaining a heavy loss.¹ All these columns in their retreat committed the greatest excesses, burning houses and massacring the inhabitants wherever they had it in their

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 81.
82. Pel. iii.
87. Barth.
98, 100.

power; while the Austrian authorities exhibited, at the same time, the noble contrast of a proclamation issued expressly to restrain the feelings of revenge arising in the breasts of the people.*

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On the same day the peasantry of the Upper and Lower Innthal rose in arms; and so active were the exertions made that, early on the morning of the 11th, twenty thousand men, directed by Teimer, were assembled on the heights around Innsbruck. In no condition to resist so formidable an assemblage, the Bavarians, who had only fifteen hundred men and a few guns in the place, withdrew into the town. But there they were speedily assailed by a furious crowd of peasants, who carried successively the external barriers, the bridge of the Inn, the artillery, and finally penetrated into the principal square, shouting out, "Long live the Emperor Francis! Down with the Bavarians!" They soon made themselves masters of the place. A frightful scene ensued. The Bavarians in some places surrendered, and begged for quarter, in others continued the combat with undaunted resolution; and in the *mêlée* several bloody deeds were committed, which, in their cooler moments, the Tyrolese would have been the first to condemn. General Kinkel, after making a brave resistance, was struck down; Colonel Dietfurth, who atoned for his former conduct by the gallantry of his last hours, desperately wounded, was made prisoner, and soon after died;¹ and the whole garrison of

33.
Capture of
Innsbruck
by the peasants of the
Upper Innthal.
April 11.

¹ *Gesch. A.*
Hofer, 88,
91. *Barth.*
100, 106.
Pel. iii. 87,
88.

* "Tyroleans! you have proved yourselves worthy to be free, and of that constitution which the Bavarians promised to respect, but have violated. You have proved yourselves worthy of liberty: do not, therefore, give way to your indignation, and become ungovernable, but act with unanimity and coolness, determined to die or be free. To injure the feeble is contemptible: no real Tyrolese will allow himself to be accused of such a deed. To follow the example of those who have nothing to lose, who molest and plunder the peaceful and inoffensive, would inevitably sow the seeds of dissension among us, and cause our ruin. Without discipline, order, and obedience, nothing will prosper: in the name of the Emperor and the Archduke, I will punish every one who disobeys his orders, and treat every one who commits excesses as an enemy to his country.—JOSEPH, BARON HORMAYER."—See *Gesch. A. Hofer*, 87, 88.

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Innsbruck, consisting of one entire regiment, four guns, a few cavalry, and several depots of battalions, were either taken or slain.

34.
Striking incident which occurred on the capture of Innsbruck.

An event here took place which strongly marked the peculiar character of the warfare which had commenced. Dietfurth, the Bavarian colonel, had made himself peculiarly obnoxious in the province, by the severity of his public, and licentiousness of his private conduct, as well as the contemptuous expressions which he had used with reference to the people.* As he lay half fainting from loss of blood in the guard-house of Innsbruck, he asked who had been the leader of the peasants. "No one," they replied: "we fought equally for God, the Emperor, and our native country."—"That is surprising," said Dietfurth, "for I saw him frequently pass me on a white horse." The report of this incident produced an extraordinary impression upon the people, by whom it was universally believed, thenceforth, that St James, the patron of the town of Innsbruck, and who was always represented, in the battles with the Moors, mounted on a white horse, had combated at their head. The cavalry which escaped from Innsbruck took refuge in a convent near the bridge of Volders; but Spechbacher, having assembled a body of insurgents from the Lower Innthal, burst open the gates on the day following by means of an immense fir-tree, which was rolled up on wheels to the massy portal by fifty of his strongest peasants, and every man was made prisoner. The Tyrolese, after these successes, set no bounds to their rejoicings: the great Imperial eagle was taken down from the tomb of Maximilian in the High Church of Innsbruck, decorated with red ribbons, and carried amid deafening acclamations through the street, the peasants flocking in crowds to gaze at and kiss it;¹ while the pictures

¹ *Gesch. A. Hofer*, 92, 93. *Inglis*, ii. 169, 172. *Barth*, 104, 106.

* He had publicly boasted at Munich, "that with his regiment and two squadrons he would disperse the ragged mob," and had been promoted instead of reprov'd for his oppressive and licentious conduct.—*Gesch. A. Hofer*, 90, 91.

April 12.

of the Archduke John and the Emperor were placed on a triumphal arch, surrounded by candles kept constantly burning—every one that passed stopping an instant, bending the knee, and exclaiming, “Long live the Emperor!”

Soon, however, in the midst of these rejoicings, the Tyrolese were called to more serious duties. The victorious peasants, who had fallen asleep on the streets or in the orchards around the town, were alarmed at three o'clock on the morning of the 12th, by the intelligence that the enemy were approaching. They proved to be the division of Bisson, which, having forced its way through the pass of Lueg and over the Brenner, from Sterzing and the valley of the Eisach, had reached Mount Ysel and the neighbourhood of the Abbey of Wilten, on its way to the northern Tyrol and Bavaria. The gates were immediately barricaded with casks, waggons, carts, and everything that could be found for that purpose, and the approaches to the city filled with armed men, ready to give the enemy a warm reception. But the Bavarians, who were descending the Brenner, were in still greater consternation than their opponents at the circumstances of their situation. With difficulty, and constantly harassed by a cloud of insurgents in their rear, they had reached the heights of Mount Ysel, overhanging the capital; and now they found Innspruck, their sole point of retreat, where they expected to obtain succour, rest, and security, occupied by twenty thousand peasants. General Kinkel, who perceived the hopelessness of their situation, wrote to General Bisson, urging him to send some confidential person into the town who might report the state of affairs; and, in pursuance of this advice, Wrede, with a large escort, soon made his appearance, and the whole were immediately taken into custody. Wrede was detained, the remainder being allowed to return to their comrades. The situation of the French and Bavarians was now almost desperate. Chastellar, with a body of armed peasants, as well as a

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35.
Arrival, defeat, and
surrender
of Bisson's
division
from Ster-
zing,
April 12.

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few regular troops, was descending the Brenner, and already menaced their rear ; while the rocks and thickets in their front and flanks were occupied by the insurgents of the Innthal, who in great strength obstructed their advance. After some unsuccessful parleying, in the course of which Bisson expressed the utmost dread of the vengeance of Napoleon if he laid down his arms, the struggle began, and a close discharge, admirably directed, thinned the ranks of the French grenadiers ; while the shouts with which the mountains resounded on all sides were so tremendous that they were completely panic-struck, and compelled their commander to consent to an unconditional surrender. Bisson laid down his arms with all his troops, including the division at Schwatz, which was to be delivered up to the Austrians there. Nearly three thousand men in all, on this occasion, fell into the hands of the enemy.^{1*}

¹ *Gesch. A.*
Hofer, 97.
Pelet, iii.
90, 99.
Barth, 106,
108.

36.
Capture of
Hall by
Spech-
bacher.

The only post of importance in the Tyrol now occupied by the Bavarians was Hall, situated on the Inn a little below Innspruck, and it soon yielded to the enterprise and skill of Spechbacher. The women and children who remained on the left bank of the Inn lighted fires on all the hills bounding the valley on that side ; and this stratagem induced the Bavarian garrison to believe, that if the town were attacked at all, it would be from the northern quarter. Thither, accordingly, they all crowded, carefully manning the ramparts and watching the approaches. Meanwhile, Spechbacher with his men silently advanced in ambush to the other side, and, when the drawbridge was let down and the gate opened, upon the bell ringing for matins, they

* Upon signing this capitulation Bisson exclaimed, " This day will be my last, the grave of my honour and military reputation. Never will Napoleon believe that this disaster might not have been averted ; even were I merely unfortunate, he would impute it to me as a crime." In this, however, the French general was mistaken : it was for the interest of the Emperor to conceal this check, and the lustre of subsequent events enabled him to accomplish this object. Bisson was not disgraced ; and, by a singular revolution of fortune, was the governor of Mantua when Hofer was shot in that fortress.—*Gesch. A. Hofer*, 97, 98.

rushed in, overpowered the guard, and made themselves masters of the town. The Bavarian prisoners, about four hundred in number, were immediately marched off under an escort consisting chiefly of women. Considering this as a studied insult, the captives were exceedingly indignant; but, in truth, it was the result of necessity — the whole male population having been marched off towards Innsbruck; and, from a similar cause, a similar service was often assigned to the female sex during the war.¹

Thus did the Tyrolese, in one week after the insurrection broke out, by means solely of their own valour and patriotism, aided by the natural strength of the country, entirely deliver the province from the enemy; recover all the fortresses, except Kufstein, which were in the hands of their oppressors; and destroy above ten thousand regular troops of the enemy, of whom six thousand were made prisoners! These extraordinary successes, too, were gained almost exclusively by the unaided efforts of the people; for though the Austrian regulars came up most opportunely in the first contest, at the bridge of San Lorenzen, yet they had no share in the subsequent triumphs, which were achieved long before their arrival at the scene of action, by the assembled peasantry; a memorable instance of what may be effected by unanimity and vigour, even in opposition to a formidable military force. The effect of these victories was to liberate the southern as well as northern Tyrol; for the French troops were so much discouraged by their reverses that they evacuated both Trent and Roveredo, and fell back to the neighbourhood of Verona. The insurrection gained all the Italian Tyrol; and it even spread into the valleys of the Oglio and the Mella, where the people were highly discontented with the government of the kingdom of Italy. Numerous bodies of partisans appeared to the north, in the Bavarian plains and the Suabian hills, and to the south, in the neighbourhood of Brescia and Verona. These latter communicated with the Archduke John, whose victory at Sacile

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¹ Barth. 116,
120. Gesch.
A. Hofer,
101, 102.

37.
Results of
these suc-
cesses. En-
tire deliver-
ance of the
Tyrol.

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¹ Pel. iii. 91,
95. (ie. ch.
A. Hofer,
100, 101,
102.

excited extraordinary enthusiasm, by the vale of the Piave; and symptoms of revolt were already manifesting themselves in all the southern valleys of the Alps, as far as Piedmont, where the people only waited for the Austrian standards to cross the Adige to break out into open insurrection. Nor was it the least honourable circumstance in this glorious contest, that though the population were strongly excited by a long course of previous injuries, and almost entirely destitute of regular officers to restrain their impetuosity, they were as much distinguished by their humanity as their valour, and, with a few exceptions, originating in the heat of assault, conducted their hostilities with at least as much moderation as disciplined soldiers.¹

38.
Menaces of
Napoleon
against
Chastellar
and Hor-
mayer.

May 5.

Meanwhile Napoleon, who was exceedingly irritated at this unlooked-for series of disasters in the Tyrol, and, notwithstanding all his power, was not able altogether to conceal them even from his own subjects, let his exasperation exhale in furious invectives against the Marquis Chastellar, to whom he ascribed both the exciting of the revolt in the Tyrol, and the cruelties which he alleged had been committed by the peasantry. The latter charge, founded upon some isolated acts of revenge perpetrated in the assault of Innsbruck, was wholly unfounded as against the Tyrolese in general; and against Chastellar, in particular, was in an especial manner false, as at the time when the acts complained of took place on the banks of the Inn, he was still at Brixen, sixty miles distant, to the south of the Brenner, and even ignorant of the whole operations to the north of that mountain. But the sentence of outlawry pronounced by Napoleon against Chastellar and Hormayer, both of whom were ordered to be delivered to a military commission as soon as taken, and shot within twenty-four hours, was of a piece with his invariable policy in such circumstances. Whenever a disaster had occurred to his arms, or an event had taken place likely to rouse an enthusiastic moral feeling against

his government, he instantly propagated some falsehood against its authors, or exaggerated some trifling incident into a mighty enormity ; and, by the vehement abuse of the persons by whom his power had thus been assailed, often succeeded, at least with his own benighted subjects, in withdrawing public attention altogether from the calamities sustained by himself, or the virtues displayed by others, which he sought to conceal.¹

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¹ Pel. iii. 95,
96. Gesch.
A. Hofer,
105, 106.

Chastellar, for a fortnight after the Tyrol was evacuated by the enemy, laboured assiduously to give something like military consistence to the tumultuary efforts of the peasantry. He succeeded in equipping a small body of cavalry, to whom he gave arms — a species of force of which these poor mountaineers stood much in need — and organised several battalions of excellent foot-soldiers. Having put matters in a train to the north of the mountains, he recrossed the Brenner with his regular troops, and, descending the valleys of the Eisach and Adige, came up with the enemy in front of the famous defile of la Pietra, between Roveredo and Trent. The French, under Baraguay d'Hilliers, six thousand strong, were there posted in a well-known position of uncommon strength, and held firm, to give the main body of their army under Eugene time to retreat in order to the banks of the Adige, after the disastrous battle of Sacile. The Austrians, having imprudently commenced an attack when worn out with the fatigue of a long march, were worsted and driven out of the defile with loss ; but the French, notwithstanding, continued their retreat to the neighbourhood of Verona, and Chastellar took up his quarters in Roveredo. From thence, however, he was soon recalled to the north of the Brenner, by the threatened invasion of the province by the French troops after the disastrous battles in Bavaria.²

39.
Actions in
the Southern
Tyrol, which
is evacuated
by the
French.

April 23.

April 24,
² Pel. iii.
169, 171.
Barth. 132,
136. Gesch.
A. Hofer,
114, 121,
128, 136.

Jellachich, as already noticed,* after the defeat of Hiller at Landshut, had retired from Munich towards Salzburg on the 24th April. Thither he was followed by Marshal

* *Ante*, Chap. LVII. § 30.

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40.

Actions on
the Salz-
burg fron-
tier.
April 29.

Lefebvre with his corps, consisting chiefly of Bavarians. The Austrian general took up a strong position in front of Salzburg, where he endeavoured to arrest the advance of the French troops ; but the numbers of the French were so superior that he was unable to effect his object, and was driven into the town with the loss of several hundred prisoners and three guns. The victors entered pell-mell with the vanquished ; and Jellachich, continuing his retreat in great disorder to the south, ascended the valley of the Salza, and crossing the mountains behind Rastadt, made the best of his way towards Villach and Carinthia, abandoning the eastern districts of the Tyrol to their fate. Thither Lefebvre shortly after bent his steps, having remained in Salzburg only long enough to put the town in a sufficient posture of defence, and establish the magazines necessary for the operations in that quarter. On the 10th May he broke up and advanced to Retchenhall, a considerable burgh still in the open country, but within a mile of the mountains, which there rise in awful majesty abrupt and sheer from the plain, to all appearance impervious by man. On the day following, the French in great force advanced to the entrance of the passes. Notwithstanding their immense superiority of numbers, such was the natural strength of the defiles,* that it is doubtful if they would have succeeded in making good their entrance had the Tyrolese guards been all at their stations. But it was Ascension-day, and a large proportion of the peasants were absent at church, or engaged in their devotions or sports on the holiday : so

* No defiles in Europe exceed in romantic interest those which lie between Retchenhall and Wörgl, through which the high-road passes. Winding by the side of torrents, through narrow ravines shut in by walls of rock, which barely leave room for a carriage-way ; often blown out of the mass, between precipices a thousand or fifteen hundred feet high ; scaling heights to appearance almost perpendicular, by an angle of elevation unknown in any other European road ; descending break-neck declivities by the side of roaring streams, in the midst of forests of matchless beauty, surmounted by romantic peaks, starting up in endless fantastic forms, six or seven thousand feet in height, they possess a degree of interest to the lover of the picturesque exceeding even the far-famed passage of the Simplon. The most ardent imagination, furnished with the

that the contest fell on four hundred regular troops, and a few companies of sharpshooters, who, notwithstanding, for several hours kept at bay a whole Bavarian division. At length the barricades and formidable defences in the tremendous defile of Strub were forced, and the Tyrolese driven, combating all the way up the frightful gorges of the Achen, back to the neighbourhood of Wörgl. There they stood firm, as they were reinforced by Chastellar with a few thousand regular troops; but on the same day intelligence arrived that the passes of the Inn, at the entrance of the plain, had been forced by Deroy with another Bavarian division, the Thierseebach crossed, and that the enemy's outposts had already appeared before Kufstein.¹

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¹ Pel. iii. 99,
100. Barth.
138, 142.
Gesch. A.
Hofer, 157,
159.

Finding himself thus threatened both from the side of Salzburg and Kufstein, Chastellar, who had only three thousand regular troops at his disposal, the remainder being a body of as many Tyrolese peasants, without any other discipline than what they had acquired in their native valleys, resolved to take the initiative, and combat Lefebvre in the first instance, before Deroy came up. With this view he occupied the defile of Feuer Singer, which lies between the ravines of the Achem and the pass of Strub, and strengthened the gorge with some rude fieldworks: but the impetuous attack of the Bavarians, flushed with the victory of Abensberg, overcame every obstacle, and the Austrians, after a bloody struggle, were driven back at the point of the bayonet to their reserves, posted at the important position of Wörgl.

41.
Combat
at Feuer
Singer and
Wörgl.

widest recollection of romantic scenery, can figure nothing approaching to the sublimity of the defile of Strub, where the road, apparently blocked up by a wall of rock two thousand feet in height, is cut through a narrow passage beside the roaring stream, and then winds its devious way amidst overhanging forests of dark pine, intermingled with huge crags of brilliant colours, and surmounted by bare peaks silvered with snow. The grandest points in the vast amphitheatre of the Alps are the valley of Berchtolsgraden; the Königs See and defile of Strub, near Salzburg; the Via Mala in the Grisons; the defile of Gondo on the route of the Simplon; the valley of Gasteren, and Oeschinen in the vale of Kandersteg, near the Gemmi; and the approach to the Grande Chartreuse in Savoy.—*Personal Observation.*

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Stationed there behind a rivulet, in a situation which commanded the junction of the roads from Kufstein and Salzburg, and barred the only access to Innspruck, Chastellar stood firm, and with four thousand regular troops and six thousand peasants, gave battle to the enemy. The open and desolate plain of Wörgl, however, was unfavourable to the operations of the new levies, who were dispirited at finding themselves driven into the open country from the fastnesses which they had deemed impregnable; and their total want of cavalry rendered them incapable of opposing with success the numerous and powerful squadrons of Linange. The Bavarians were greatly superior in number, being eighteen thousand strong, with thirty pieces of cannon, while the united Tyrolese and Austrians hardly amounted to half that number. After a short combat, the Austrians were entirely defeated with the loss of all their baggage, ammunition, and guns, seven in number; which, with five hundred prisoners, fell into the hands of the enemy.¹

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 157.
159. Pel.
iii. 101,
102. Barth.
142, 148.

42.
Innspruck
taken by the
Bavarians.
May 19.

Nothing now remained to prevent the conquest of the Lower Innthal by the Bavarians; and if they had pushed on with vigour and rapidity, they might have struck a seasonable terror into the insurgents by the capture of their principal leaders and magazines at Innspruck. But they advanced so tardily that they gave the Tyrolese time to recover from their consternation; reinforcements poured down from the Brenner, and the mountains of Scharnitz, to the fugitives from Wörgl; and Chastellar, who narrowly escaped being made prisoner by the enemy, met with Hormayer at Steinach, and concerted measures for future operations. Slowly moving up the valley of the Inn, Lefebvre found the resistance of the people increase with every step he advanced; Schwatz was only carried by assault after a desperate resistance, and burned, in the struggle, to the ground. Frightful atrocities marked the steps of the invaders,

the Bavarians wreaking their vengeance on the unhappy peasants, for the real or imaginary injuries they had received, by the perpetration of the most revolting military cruelties. Old men, women, and children, were massacred indiscriminately, and every village from which a shot had issued was committed to the flames. Meanwhile Chastellar, who had been strongly irritated at the Tyrolese, on account of the furious conduct of some drunken peasants at Hall, who tried to pull him from his horse from indignation at his retreat, had repassed the Brenner, and the Innthal was again thrown upon its own resources. On the 19th, Lefebvre appeared before Innsbruck, which submitted without resistance, the minds even of the heroic leaders of the insurrection being stunned by the misfortunes which were now accumulating around them on all sides, and justly considering a prolonged resistance hopeless after Vienna had opened its gates to the enemy, and the Archduke John had evacuated the Carinthian mountains.¹

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May 14.

May 19.

¹ Moniteur,
June 8,
1809. Pel.
iii. 104,
106. Gesch.
A. Hofer,
158, 165.

The Archduke John, on occasion of his first disaster on the Piave, on 30th April, wrote to Hofer in these words:—"Do not allow the misfortunes of Germany to make you uneasy: we have done our duty, and will defend the Tyrol, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, and Salzburg, to the last drop of our blood. It is in that fortress, aided by our brave mountaineers, that we ought to conquer or die, for the glory of our ancestors and our arms. *I shall not retire to Hungary.*" And on 3d May he wrote to Chastellar:—"Our misfortunes in Germany have obliged me to abandon the offensive, and to direct my attention to the provinces, which are of so much consequence to Austria. Do not be alarmed: the Tyrol shall never be forsaken: *I will defend it and the interior of Austria to the last extremity.*" It would have been well for the Archduke John and the Austrian monarchy if he had adhered to these resolutions, and thrown himself into the Tyrol, when obliged to evacuate Italy by

43.

The Archduke John violates his orders and promises, and evacuates Styria and the Tyrol.

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¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 140,
141.

the disasters in Bavaria ; as in that case he would have been in a situation to have taken part in the important and probably decisive operation projected by the Archduke Charles at Lintz, on the 22d May, and protected the interior of the monarchy as effectually as under the ramparts of Vienna. Instead of this, he at once disobeyed his brother's orders and those of the Aulic Council, and violated his own promises, by retiring into Hungary, and thereby not only caused the whole fruits of the battle of Aspern to be lost, but saved Napoleon from a disastrous retreat.¹

44.
Desperate
state of
affairs in
the Tyrol,
and firm-
ness of the
peasantry.

Affairs in the Tyrol were now wellnigh desperate ; for, at the very time when these disasters were accumulating on the north of the Brenner, a strong French force of fifteen thousand men, under Baraguay d'Hilliers and Rusca, detached by Eugene after his victory on the Piave—to which the peasants, now stripped of the regular troops for the defence of the Innthal, had nothing to oppose—was rapidly advancing up the valley of the Adige, and had already occupied Roveredo and menaced Trent. Chastellar, despairing of success, had made arrangements for leaving the country ; and Hormayer, who, with unshaken resolution, was still endeavouring to rouse the peasantry in the lateral valleys of the Innthal, found them in most places indignant at the retreat of the Austrians, and fast returning to their homes. General Buol, indeed, with two thousand five hundred men and six guns, still occupied the crest of the Brenner ; but his troops were in a wretched condition, starving with cold, destitute of ammunition, and almost without provisions. In these mournful circumstances, it was the invincible tenacity of the peasantry in the Upper Innthal, and the elevated parts of the Brenner and Scharnitz ranges of mountains, which restored the fortunes of the campaign. Eisensticken, Hofer's aide-de-camp, Spechbacher, and Friar Haspinger, vied with each other in the indefatigable ardour with which they roused the people. The first fell himself on his knees to General

Buol, when he was preparing to abandon the Brenner, and by the vehemence of his entreaties prevailed upon him to keep his ground in that important position. Hofer, who in the first instance was thrown into the deepest dejection by the misfortunes impending over his country, and rendered incapable of active exertion, was roused by their example to nobler efforts; and appearing at the head of his peasants, forced the Passeyrthal, and commenced a fierce attack on the Bavarians at Passberg, near Mount Ysel, which, though unsuccessful, struck no small alarm into the enemy, from the gallantry with which it was conducted. This combat renewed the war-like ardour of the Tyrolese, who flocked from all quarters in great strength to the general place of gathering on Mount Ysel, which ancient prophecy led them to expect was to be the theatre of great events to the Tyrol; while Lefebvre, who deemed the affairs of the province settled by the capture of Innsbruck, and the submission of the authorities in that place, had set out for Salzburg, leaving Deroy at the capital, with eight thousand foot, eight hundred horse, and twenty pieces of cannon.¹

May 25.

¹ Pel. iii.
106, 107;
iv. 31, 32.
Gesch. A.
Hofer, 217,
229. Barth.
138, 150.

The forces engaged on the 29th May, on the heights of Mount Ysel, were, in numerical strength, very unequal; the Tyrolese having nine hundred infantry, seventy horse, and five guns of the Austrian troops, besides a motley assemblage of peasants, to the number of twenty thousand men—individually brave and skilled in the use of arms, but altogether undisciplined and unaccustomed to act together in large masses; while the Bavarians had only eight thousand foot, eight hundred horse, and twenty-five guns. The numerical superiority, however, of the former was fully counterbalanced by their great inferiority in discipline, cavalry, and artillery; so that the real military strength of both sides might be considered as very nearly equal. Hofer did his best to compensate his weakness in cavalry, by stationing his followers, as much as possible, in the wooded heights at the foot of Mount Ysel, where

45.
Prepara-
tions for the
battle of
Innsbruck.
May 28.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

¹ Pel. iv. 41.
Gesch. A.
Hofer, 231,
232. Schoell,
Hist. des
Trait. de
Paix, 9, 257.
Erz. Johan.
Feldzug
1809, 162.

horsemen could not penetrate ; but the town was not to be carried by such a blockade, and the impetuous spirit of the peasantry led them to demand an immediate assault. Their spirits had been elevated to the highest degree by the intelligence of the battle of Aspern, which had been communicated with extraordinary rapidity to the most secluded valleys, and by a proclamation issued by the Emperor Francis the day after that glorious event, dated Breitenlee, 23d May, in which he solemnly engaged “never to lay down his arms till the Tyrol was reunited to the Austrian monarchy.”¹ *

46.
Battle of
Innsbruck,
and total
defeat of the
Bavarians,
May 29.

The attack on Innsbruck was combined with more military skill than could have been anticipated from the untutored character of the leaders by whom it was conducted. Spechbacher, who, in spite of the utmost vigilance of the Bavarians, had contrived to warn the peasants on both sides of the Inn of the approaching gathering, † menaced the bridge of Hall, and the line of retreat down the valley of the Inn from the northern side, while Colonel Reissenfels co-operated in the same direction from the southern valleys, by a descent along the right bank of the Sill and an attack on the castle of Ambras. Hofer descended with all the strength of the southern and cen-

* Hofer addressed the following characteristic letter to the inhabitants of the Upper Innthal:—“Dear brethren of the Upper Innthal! For God, the Emperor, and our Fatherland! To-morrow, early in the morning, is fixed for the attack. With the help of the blessed Virgin, we will seize and destroy the Bavarians, and confide ourselves to the beloved Jesus. Come to our assistance: but if you fancy yourselves wiser than Divine Providence, we will do without you.—ANDREW HOFER.”—*Gesch. A. HOFER*, 238.

The proclamation of the Emperor Francis to the Tyrolese, dated 1st June 1809, bore—“Operations at all points are about to recommence: I will send you a helping hand. We will combat together for our country and our religion. Your noble conduct has sunk deep into my heart: *I will never abandon you*. The Archduke John will speedily be amongst you, and put himself at your head.”—ERZH. JOHAN, *Feldzug in jahre* 1809, 162.

† “All the passages over the Inn, and especially the bridge of Hall, were vigilantly guarded by the Bavarian posts, who justly deemed it a matter of especial importance to prevent any joint measure being concerted on the opposite sides of the river. Spechbacher, however, undertook the perilous mission of opening up a communication between the northern and southern valleys. Accompanied by his trusty companions, George Zoppel and Simon Lechner, and a young peasant girl, Zoppel’s servant, he set out on the evening of Whit-

tral valleys of Tyrol, from the Brenner and Mount Ysel; while Teimer, with a small band of six hundred resolute followers, was sent by a circuitous route to the heights of Hottingen on the north of the town, and in the rear of the Bavarians, to make his appearance in the middle of the action, and spread terror among the enemy, from the belief that they were beset on all sides. Thus the battle consisted of a variety of detached combats in different directions around Innspruck, contemporary with the now furious struggle at the foot of Mount Ysel, between the main body of the combatants on either side. By day-break, Spechbacher was at the post assigned to him, and, amidst loud shouts, carried the important bridge of Hall with such vigour that it gained for him the surname of *Der Feuer-Teufel*, the Fire-Devil. The castle of Ambras soon after yielded to the impetuous assault of Reissenfels, and the whole right bank of the Sill was cleared of the enemy; but they long held their ground at the bridge of Passberg, commanding the passage of that torrent by the great road on the south of the Inn. From this position, however, they were at length driven about noon, by the more skilled attacks of Captain Dobrawa;¹ and the left flank of the enemy being thus completely turned, and their retreat down the Inn cut off, they were

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 240,
245. Barth.
192, 196.
Ingliš, ii.
183.

Monday. In the evening they encountered a body of a hundred Bavarian dragoons: Spechbacher and his companions concealed themselves behind some pine-trees at the foot of a cliff, fired on the party from their ambush, and immediately scaling the precipice, loaded and fired again. The Bavarians, conceiving they were attacked by a numerous body of sharpshooters, fled, and left the passage open. Spechbacher met with Hofer accordingly, and a general assemblage around Innspruck was arranged for the 28th May. On his return, however, fresh difficulties were encountered: the bridge of Hall and all the points of transit were vigilantly guarded, and every person rigorously searched who attempted to pass from one side to the other. In this perplexity he was relieved by the inventive genius of his trusty companion, George Zoppel, and his servant-maid. The girl first crossed the bridge; and as nothing suspicious was found upon her, she was allowed to pass. Then George Zoppel presented himself; after him came Spechbacher's great poodle-dog, in whose woolly tail the despatches were concealed; and while the sentinels were busily employed in searching Zoppel's pockets, the dog, obedient to the call of the servant-maid, brushed past the soldiers and ran up to her. Spechbacher came last; but being unknown, and nothing found upon him, he was allowed to pass."—BARTHOLDY, *Krieg* 1809, 168, 172.

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LVIII.

1809.

47.

Bloody
action of
Hofer and
Haspinger.

thrown back in great disorder to the village and abbey of Wilten.

While affairs were proceeding so prosperously on the east of Innspruck, a more dubious conflict was raging in the centre and on the left, at the foot of Mount Ysel. Haspinger, with a huge wooden cross in his hand, here led on the attack, and animated his followers not less by his example, than by the assurances of Divine protection which he held forth. He was followed by Colonel Ertell with the most disciplined part of the Tyrolese, two thousand strong; while Hofer, with the peasants of the Passeyrthal, descended from Mount Ysel by the great road direct upon Innspruck; his brave but tumultuous array shouting aloud—"For God, the Emperor, and our Fatherland!"* The outposts of the enemy were speedily driven in by the superior numbers and unerring aim of the Tyrolese riflemen; but when they advanced out of the woods and broken knolls to the open ground in front of the town, where the Bavarians were drawn up in line in admirable order, the usual superiority of discipline and organisation became apparent, and the peasants were driven back. Rallying, however, among the rocks and thickets, they again poured down a destructive shower of balls on their assailants, and both sides maintained the contest with the most undaunted resolution. The ammunition of the Tyrolese, with which they were very scantily provided, at length began to fail; they were compelled to reserve their fire till it could be given with decisive effect; and balls could be obtained only by the women and children,† who picked up those of the enemy which fell in the rear of the combatants. In this anxious moment, Teimer's bands appeared on the heights of Hottingen in

* "Fur Got, den Kaiser und Vaterland."

† Spechbacher was attended in the battle by his little son Andrew, a boy of ten years of age. When the fire grew warm, his father ordered him to quit the field; the boy did so, but soon returned, and was again at his side. Irritated at this disobedience, Spechbacher struck him, and ordered him to withdraw. He did so; but without retiring out of reach of the shot, observed where the balls struck the ground, and bringing his hat full of them next morning to his

the rear of the Bavarians ; and though their attack was restrained by the troops which Deroy sent to oppose their progress, yet this circumstance, joined to the disastrous accounts of the progress of Spechbacher on the left, determined Deroy to retreat. At four in the afternoon, a sort of suspension of arms was agreed to by the leaders on both sides ; and as soon as it was dark the Bavarians commenced their retreat by the left bank of the Inn, and, evacuating Innspruck and the great road, withdrew by mountain paths amidst rocks and forests to Kufstein, from whence they continued their march to Rosenheim in the Bavarian plains.¹

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 238,
249. Barth.
202, 212.
Ingles, ii.
183, 184.
Pel. iv. 34,
36. Bava-
rian Account
of the Battle,
Moniteur,
June 22,
1809.

In this battle the Bavarians lost four thousand men ; but, what was of still more importance, they were deprived by it of the possession of the whole of the Tyrol. Intoxicated with joy, the peasants crowded into Innspruck in such numbers, that they were an oppression rather than a source of strength to the Austrian commanders, who were totally destitute of ammunition or military arms for the ardent multitude. A proclamation was immediately issued, calling on all persons to bring forth their little stores of money and powder for the use of the troops ; and considerable supplies were obtained in this way, though in no degree proportionate to the wants of the people. The desperate struggle in the heart of Austria required every sabre and bayonet around the walls of Vienna ; the intervening country was all in the hands of the enemy, and not a dollar or a gun could be obtained from that quarter. Such, however, was the native vigour of the inhabitants, that without any external aid, or the support of regular troops, they not only cleared their territory of the enemy,² but carried their

48.
Results of
these vic-
tories in
the entire
deliverance
of the Tyrol.

² Gesch. A.
Hofer, 259.
265. Barth.
212, 215,
Pel. iv. 38,
39.

father, begged that they might be used against the enemy. The wounded in this battle refused to be carried from the field, lest those who conveyed them to a place of safety should weaken the combatants ; and numbers of women throughout the day were to be seen behind the ranks, bringing up ammunition, water, and refreshments to the wearied men.—See BARTH. *Krieg* 1809, 204-216 ; *Gesch. A. HOFER*, 248.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

49.

The Tyro-
lese even
make incur-
sions into
all the
neighbour-
ing country.
June 3.

incursions into the adjoining provinces of Suabia, Bavaria, and Lombardy.

June 6.

June 9.

June 29.

On the west, the peasantry of the Vorarlberg repulsed a body of French and Würtembergers who attempted to penetrate into Bregentz; on the east, Chastellar, who had collected four thousand regular troops, raised the blockade of Sachsenburg, and drove the enemy back to Villach; in the south, Leinengen cleared the whole valley of Trent of the enemy, and then, turning to the left, descended the defile of the Val Sugano, and made himself master of Bassano at the entrance of the plains of Treviso. Returning from thence to the banks of the Adige, he threw himself into the castle of Trent, where he was soon besieged by a division of Eugene's Italian army. The landsturm of the upper Adige, however, flew to his relief; the Italians, overwhelmed by numbers, retired with considerable loss to Dolce; and the whole valley of the Adige, as far as Verona, was cleared of the enemy. The Vorarlberg followed the example of the Tyrol: all the valleys took up arms, and seven thousand well-armed marksmen, besides a landsturm of equal force, carried terror and devastation over all the adjacent provinces of Germany. Moeskirch and Memmingen were successively occupied, and laid under contribution; Constance fell into their hands; their victorious bands appeared even at the gates of Munich and Augsburg; and, in conjunction with the inhabitants of Suabia, who were highly discontented with the exactions and tyranny of the French troops, delivered no less than seventeen thousand of the prisoners taken at Ehmühl, Ebersberg, and Vienna, who found refuge in the valleys of the Tyrol, and were speedily formed into fresh battalions. To the south of the Alps, Bassano, Belluno, Feltre, were repeatedly in their possession; they communicated with the Austrian regulars in Carniola; levied contributions to the gates of Verona, Brescia, and Como;¹ and, spreading the flame of insurrection from the

¹ Pel. iv. 38,
39. Ann.
Reg. 1809,
218. Gesch.
A. Hofer,
259, 277.
Barth. 212,
220.

Black Forest to the plains of Lombardy, and from Salzburg to the Grisons, soon had twenty thousand infantry and eight hundred horse, regularly organised and equipped, under arms, besides a still greater number of brave men, undisciplined indeed, but skilled in the use of arms, ready, in case of invasion, to defend their native valleys.

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LVIII.

1809.

While this heroic contest was going forward in the Tyrol and Vorarlberg, the generous flame had extended to the north of Germany, and the indignant feelings of an insulted people had wellnigh induced a general revolt against the French authority in Saxony and Westphalia.

50.
Rise of the
insurrection
in the north
of Germany.

It has been already detailed with what ardent though inconsiderate enthusiasm the people of Prussia had rushed into the contest of 1806, and what oppressive burdens were laid upon them after its disastrous termination.* Since that time the continued presence of the French troops, and the enormous plunder levied by their authority under the name of contributions, had still further spread the flame of discontent: dear-bought experience had dispelled all the illusions in favour of French principles, and the people were nowhere so ready to throw off the yoke as in those principalities where separate thrones had been erected in favour of members of the Buonaparte family. Such was the weight of the oppression under which they laboured, that the ramifications of a secret and most formidable insurrection were spread over all the north of Germany. The ancient Gothic blood, slow to warm, but enduring in purpose, was everywhere inflamed; the feeling of patriotism, a sense of duty, the precepts of religion, all concurred to rouse a disposition to resistance. The selfish mourned over the visible decrease of their substance under the withering contributions of Napoleon; the generous, over the degradation of their country and

* *Ante*, Chap. XLIII. § 89; and Chap. XLVI. § 82.

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LVIII.

1809.

the slavery of the human race. Everywhere the Tugendbund was in activity : Hesse-Cassel, Hanover, and Westphalia, in an especial manner, were agitated, from the enormous weight of the burdens imposed on their inhabitants by the French government. Twenty thousand disbanded soldiers were scattered over the former dominions of England in the German empire, ready at the first signal to compose an army ; as many ardent and discontented spirits existed in Cassel and Westphalia, awaiting only the first success of the Austrian arms to declare openly in their behalf. From the Thuringian forest to the banks of the Vistula, from the Bohemian mountains to the shores of the Baltic, the threads of a vast association existed, held together by the sacred bond of patriotism, its members vowed to devote themselves to their fatherland. Though the court of Berlin did not venture openly to fan the flame, yet in secret they could not but wish for its success ; and several of the most energetic members of the cabinet awaited only the advance of the Austrian banners to urge Frederick-William to join the great confederacy for European freedom.¹

¹ Hard. x.
325, 326.
Pel. iii. 10,
13. Ann.
Reg. 1809,
212, 213.

51.

Its first outbreak on the approach of the Austrian Grand Army.

It was chiefly with a view to give support and consistency to this enthusiastic spirit that the grand Austrian army, in the opening of the campaign, advanced towards Baireuth and Franconia ; and it was in consequence of the unfortunate abandonment of that design, and the return of great part of these troops, when already on the borders of Franconia, to the banks of the Inn, that the early disasters of the campaign, as already noticed, were incurred.* Two of the Archduke's corps were far advanced towards the Rhine, and could not be recalled in time to share in the battles of Abensberg and Echemühl ; while the concentrated masses of Napoleon were thrown upon the Imperial army, weakened in the centre by the advance of the van in one direction, and the retreat of

* *Ante*, Chap. LVI. § 20.

the rear in another. But this early irruption of the Austrians towards Franconia and Saxony excited a prodigious sensation in the adjoining provinces under the immediate control of the French authorities ; and early in April, a spark kindled the flame on the banks of the Elbe. Katt, a Prussian officer, had the honour of first raising the standard of independence in the north of Germany ; but the effort was premature, and having failed in an attempt upon Magdeburg, he was compelled, by the active pursuit of the Westphalian horse, to take refuge in the Prussian states. The next outbreak took place three weeks after, when Dornberg, the colonel of a regiment of Westphalian horse, was commanded by King Jerome to march against a body of insurgents. Conceiving himself discovered, he left his colours and put himself at their head. Evincing, in these critical circumstances, a spirit worthy of his family, though far beyond his ordinary character, Jerome assembled his guards, two thousand strong, and assuring them that he confided in their honour, and threw himself upon their support, succeeded in attaching even the most disaffected, by the bond of military honour, to his cause. Ebel, the minister at war, and Rewbell, governor of Cassel, displayed the greatest vigour and firmness of character ; and, by their energetic measures, saved the kingdom when on the verge of destruction, and prevented a general insurrection breaking out in the north of Germany. Dornberg, at the head of several thousand insurgents, marched upon the capital ; but having been encountered near its gates by a part of the garrison, whom he was unable to bring to a parley, his undisciplined followers were dispersed by a few discharges of cannon, and he himself fled with a few followers to the Hartz mountains. His papers were seized at Homberg, and among them were some that compromised several persons in the service of other powers, particularly SCHILL, at that time a colonel in the Prussian army.¹

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

April 3.

April 23.

¹ Pel. iii. 14,
19. Hard. x.
326. Jom.
iii. 232.

CHAP.
LVIII.1809.
52.Enterprise
and early
success of
Schill.

April 29.

This enthusiastic officer, an ardent member of the Tugendbund, and heart and soul devoted to his fatherland, was the first Prussian officer who had entered Berlin at the head of a native force after its evacuation by the French troops ; and the impression made upon his mind by the universal transports which prevailed on that occasion had never been effaced. His intentions were fixed ; but the ardour of his disposition was tempered by a rare prudence, and but for the accidental discovery of his name among the papers of Dornberg, his enterprise would in all probability have been delayed till the period for its successful prosecution had arrived. Almost every day he led his regiment out of Berlin, in full marching order, to reviews, marches, and mock-fights, which so completely imposed upon the ministers of Russia, France, and Westphalia, that, with all their vigilance, they never suspected him of being engaged in any sinister design ; while his engaging manners and martial qualities rendered him the idol of the soldiers under his command. Denounced, at length, by the King of Westphalia to the King of Prussia, who was then at Königsberg, he was summoned by the latter to the royal presence to give an account of his conduct. Perceiving now that he was discovered, he boldly threw off the mask ; marched at the head of six hundred men out of Berlin, under pretence of going to manœuvre, and at once erected the standard against France. He was speedily reinforced by three hundred more, who joined him during the night ; the whole inhabitants of the capital applauded his conduct ; and such was the excitement in the garrison, that it was with the utmost difficulty they were prevented from proceeding in a body to his standard. The cabinet of Berlin, whatever may have been their secret wishes, were too much overawed by the influence of Napoleon, and the intelligence recently received of his astonishing victories in Bavaria, to sanction this hazardous proceeding.¹ Schill was indited for disobedience of orders, and outlawed for non-appearance ;

¹ Hard. x.
327, 328.
Pel. iii. 17,
23. Jom. iii.
233, 234.
Thib. vii.
274.

and Lestocq, Tauenzein, and Scharnhorst, who were known to be at the head of the war party, sent in their resignations. The two former were brought to trial, but acquitted, there being no evidence to connect them with Schill's enterprise.

Meanwhile Schill, having collected about twelve hundred men, presented himself before Wittenberg, where there was known to be a considerable magazine of arms and ammunition; but he was refused admittance by the governor. He next moved towards Magdeburg, which at that period was garrisoned only by two companies of French, and three of Westphalian voltigeurs. Had he succeeded in gaining possession of that important fortress, all the north of Germany would have been in a blaze; for it contained five hundred pieces of cannon, and a hundred and twenty thousand stand of arms, besides ammunition in proportion. The news of so vast an acquisition would speedily have brought thirty thousand men to his standards, whom its impregnable ramparts would have given the means of disciplining in security. It is the more to be regretted that he did not attempt a *coup-de-main* against it, as the urban guards would speedily have given him the means of defending its walls, and numerous partisans within the town were already prepared to favour his entrance. Ignorant, however, of these propitious circumstances, he turned aside upon the first appearance of resistance, at the distance of a mile from the glacis, and retired to Dornitz on the other side of the Elbe—having by an equally unfortunate accident diverged from the Hartz mountains, where he might have united with the remains of Dornberg's corps, which had taken refuge in their fastnesses; and together they would have formed a body of disciplined men, adequate to the encounter of the whole forces of Westphalia, which at that period contained hardly two thousand regular soldiers. His unfortunate direction, however, down the Elbe, deluded by the hope of obtaining succour from the English

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LVIII.

1809.

53.
He fails in
his attempt
on Magde-
burg, and
retires to
Stralsund.

Atlas,
Plate 39.

May 7.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

May 25.

¹ Pel. iii. 23,

31. Jom. iii.

234. Hard.

x. 330, 331.

Ann. Reg.

1809, 213.

cruisers on the coast, led him far away from all assistance ; and at length being pursued, though slowly, and at a respectful distance, by a considerable body of Dutch and Westphalian troops, he threw himself into Stralsund, of which he gained possession without much resistance, the greater part of the garrison having joined his standard.¹

54.

His prospects there.

He was now at length within a renowned fortress, abundantly stored with provisions, and communicating with the sea ; the isle of Rugen seemed to offer a secure asylum in case of disaster ; and he had the good fortune, the day after his arrival, to capture a convoy of seven hundred barrels of powder on its road to Denmark. But the defences of the fortress had been almost entirely dismantled by order of Napoleon : only twenty rusty guns were mounted on the ramparts ; the palisades were levelled with the ground ; and the ditches, half choked up by luxuriant vegetation, presented hardly any obstacle to an enemy. Still Schill had considerable means of resistance at his disposal : his troops had swelled to two thousand infantry, and twelve squadrons of cavalry ; two companies had been formed of students from the universities, armed as yet only with pikes ; and the landwehr of Pomerania, five thousand strong, might be expected to augment his forces, if he could hold out for a few days, in order to give them time to assemble. Where, where was England then ? A single brig, with her pendant, would have inspired such spirit into the garrison as would have rendered them invincible ; three thousand men and a few frigates, would have rendered Stralsund the base of an insurrection which would speedily have spread over the whole of northern Germany, determined the irresolution of Prussia, thrown eighty thousand men on Napoleon's line of communication, and driven him to a disastrous retreat from Aspern to the Rhine. But the English government, as usual, insensible to the value of time in war, had made no preparation to turn to

good account this demonstration in their favour in the north of Germany; and, as with the Vendéans at Granville in 1793,* her forces did not appear on the theatre till the standards of her allies had sunk in the conflict. In vain all eyes were turned towards the ocean; in vain every steeple was crowded with gazers, anxiously surveying with telescopes the distant main: not a friendly sail appeared, not a pendant of England brought hope and consolation to the besieged.¹

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

¹ Pel. iii. 34.
Hard. x.
330. Jom.
iii. 234.

Deprived of the hope for succour, on which he had mainly relied in directing his steps to the sea-coast, Schill did all that prudence and energy could effect to strengthen his position. Palisades were hastily erected; the vicinity of the gates was armed; barricades were thrown up behind the breaches and in the streets, and the external defences put in some sort of order. But, before his preparations could be completed, the hand of fate was upon him. The French authorities, now everywhere thoroughly alive to the dangers of this insurrection, made the most vigorous efforts to crush it in the bud: troops marched from all sides to the neighbourhood of Stralsund; the Dutch and Danish soldiers were united to all the French who could be hastily drawn together; and on the 31st May, General Gratien, with six thousand men, commenced the assault. The patriots made a gallant defence; but the dismantled walls presented huge breaches on all sides, through which, despite the utmost resistance, the assailants penetrated, and the interior barricades were forced. Still every street was obstinately contested. The result was yet doubtful, when Schill was killed, and his heroic band, disheartened and without a leader, after his loss dispersed. With barbarous and inexcusable severity, the prisoners, though not subjects of France, were sent to the galleys in France, instead of being treated as prisoners of war, which they in reality

55.
His defeat
and death.

May 31.

* *Ante*, Chap. XII. § 88.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.
1 Pel. iii. 35.
Hard. x.
330, 331.
Jom. iii.
234. Ann.
Reg. 1809,
213. Bign.
viii. 231.

were. But the blow struck was decisive. The insurrection in the north of Germany was extinguished ; and, on the same day on which General Gratien had hoisted the French colours on the walls, the English cruisers approached the harbour. Arrived a few hours sooner, the place had been secured, the insurrection spread over the whole north of Germany, and Wagram had been Leipsic ! Such is the value of time in war.¹

56.
Movement
of the Duke
of Brunsw-
wick.
May 4.

May 22.

The Duke of Brunswick-Oels, who, at the same time that Schill left Berlin, had with a small Austrian force advanced out of the Bohemian frontier, and made himself master of Leipsic and other considerable towns in Saxony, being unable to effect a junction either with Schill or Dornberg, and surrounded by superior forces, was obliged to retire by Zittau into Bohemia, from whence, after the battle of Wagram, he contrived to make his way across all the north of Germany, and was ultimately taken on board the English cruisers, and conveyed, with his black legion, still two thousand strong, to the British shores. The insurrection was thus everywhere suppressed ; but such was the impression which it produced upon Napoleon, that the whole corps of Kellermann, thirty thousand strong, which otherwise would have been called up to the support of the Grand Army, was directed to the north of Germany.²

2 Ann. Reg.
1809, 213.
Pel. iii. 26.
Jom. 235.

57.
Operations
in Poland
under the
Archduke
Ferdinand.

This gigantic contest stained also the waters of the Vistula with blood. It has been already mentioned* that the Archduke Ferdinand, at the head of a corps of the Austrian army, mustering in all thirty-two thousand infantry and five thousand cavalry, with ninety-six guns, was destined to invade the grand-duchy of Warsaw, at the same time that the Archduke Charles crossed the Inn, and the Archduke John descended from the Carinthian mountains into the Italian plains. The direction of so considerable a portion of the Imperial troops to a

* *Ante*, Chap. LVI. § 17.

quarter where their operations could have no immediate effect upon the issue of the campaign, at a time when it might easily have been foreseen that the whole force of Napoleon might be hurled at once against the heart of the monarchy, might justly be stigmatised as a serious fault on the part of the Austrian cabinet, if military operations and consequences alone were taken into consideration. But this was very far indeed from being the case. Throughout the whole contest, the military preparations of the cabinet of Vienna were justly considered as subordinate to their political measures; and it was chiefly in consequence of the former being unsuccessful that the latter miscarried. The government were well aware that, the moment they threw down the gauntlet, the whole military force which Napoleon could command would be directed with consummate skill against the centre of their power. They could not hope, even with the aid of English subsidies, to be successful, in the crippled state of the monarchy, in resisting so formidable an invasion, unless they succeeded in rousing other nations to engage with them in the contest.¹

To effect this, early and imposing success was requisite; something which should counterbalance the prevailing and far-spread terror of the French arms, and induce neutral or semi-hostile cabinets to forget their divisions, and incur the risk of venturing boldly for the cause of general freedom. It was toward the attainment of this object that all the military demonstrations of the cabinet of Vienna at that period had been directed. The march of the Archduke Charles towards Franconia and Baireuth was intended to determine the hesitation of the Rhenish Confederacy, and rouse the numerous malcontents of Westphalia, Hanover, and Cassel, into action; that of the Archduke John and Chastellar, to spread the flame of insurrection through the plains of Italy and the mountains of the Tyrol and the Vorarlberg. Not less important than either of these, in its political consequences,

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

¹ Pel. iii. 46,
47. Jom. iii.
237, 238.

58.
Objects of
those operations.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

the advance of the Archduke Ferdinand with an imposing force to Warsaw, would, it was hoped, at once paralyse the strength of Saxony, the only sincere ally of Napoleon among the native German powers, by depriving it of all aid from its Polish possessions; offer a rallying point to the numerous discontented in that kingdom; afford an inducement to Prussia to join the common cause, by securing its rear and holding out the prospect of regaining its valuable Polish provinces; and at the same time give Russia a decent pretext for avoiding any active part in the contest, by the apparent necessity of providing against hostilities on her own frontier; a pretext of which there was reason to hope the cabinet of St Petersburg, despite the French alliance, would not be unwilling to take advantage.¹

¹ Jom. iii.
237, 238.
Pel. iii. 46,
48. Thib.
vii. 310.

59.
Forces of
the grand-
duchy of
Warsaw.
Success of
Ferdinand,
and fall of
Warsaw.

The army of which PRINCE PONIATOWSKY had the direction, in the grand-duchy of Warsaw, was not equal to the encounter of so considerable a force as the Austrians now directed against him. Great activity, indeed, had been displayed, since the peace of Tilsit, in organising an effective body of troops in that recently acquired possession of the house of Saxony; and three legions of infantry, commanded by Poniatowsky, Zayonscheck, and Dombrowsky, formed a total force of twenty-two thousand men, including nearly six thousand excellent cavalry. But great part of these troops were newly levied, and had not yet acquired an adequate degree of military efficiency; the territory they had to guard, extending from Dantzic to Cracow, was extensive; and the flower of the Polish troops were in Napoleon's Imperial Guard, or engaged in distant hostilities in the Spanish peninsula. The French Emperor, moreover, relying on the invasion of the Austrian province of Galicia by the Russian forces, had not only made no dispositions to support the grand-duchy with external aid, but had retained the Saxons under Bernadotte for immediate support to the Grand Army on the Bohemian frontier; so that Poniatowsky found him-

self, with not more than twelve thousand disposable troops, exposed in front of Warsaw to the attack of nearly triple that number of enemies. That renowned leader, however, who to an ardent love of his country united the most profound hatred of the strangers by whom it had been despoiled, and military talents of no ordinary kind, matured in the best school, that of misfortune, resolved to stand firm with this inconsiderable body; and without invoking or trusting to the aid of the Russians, more hateful as allies than the Austrians as enemies, to rely on their own valour alone for the defence of the capital. He drew up his little army at Razyn with considerable skill, and for four hours opposed a gallant resistance to the enemy; but the contest was too unequal, between thirty thousand regular soldiers and twelve thousand men in great part recently levied; and he was at length obliged to retire with the loss of five hundred killed, a thousand wounded, and four pieces of cannon. Warsaw was now uncovered; and as Poniatowsky found himself unable to man the extensive works which had been begun for its defence, he was compelled, with bitter regret, to sign a capitulation, in virtue of which he was permitted to evacuate the capital, which two days afterwards was occupied by the Austrian troops.¹

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

April 19.

April 21.
April 23.
¹ Pel. iii. 55,
63. Jom.
iii. 237, 238.
Ogintha, ii.
358.

Accompanied by the senate, authorities, and principal inhabitants of Warsaw, Poniatowsky retired to the right bank of the Vistula, and took up a position between Modlin and Sierock, on the Bug. The capital presented a mournful appearance on the entrance of the Imperialists; and in the melancholy countenances of the citizens might be seen how deep-seated was the national feeling, which, notwithstanding all the political insanity of the people which had subverted their independence, still longed for that first of blessings. The Archduke Ferdinand, with the view of paying a compliment to the inhabitants, sent a message to the Countess Stanislaus Potocka, a Polish

60.
Skillful
measures
of Poniatowsky to
prolong the
contest in
the grand-duchy.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

lady of high rank, that he would visit her in the course of the evening. He expected to meet all the chief nobility in her saloons, but he found them deserted. The countess received him alone. The direction of the march of Poniatowsky was conceived with considerable skill, and had a powerful influence upon the fate of the campaign, for the Austrians had calculated upon his retiring to Saxony, and abandoning the grand-duchy to its fate; whereas the continuance of the Polish troops in the centre of that country both evinced a determination to defend it to the last extremity, and kept alive the spirit of the inhabitants by the assurance which it held out that they would not be deserted. The first care of Poniatowsky was to put the important fortresses of Modlin and Sierock in a respectable posture of defence; and having done so, he boldly, by the directions of Napoleon, left the enemy in possession of the capital and three-fourths of the territory of the grand-duchy, and threw himself upon the right bank of the Vistula, remounting that stream towards Galicia, whither Prince Gallitzin, at the head of twenty thousand auxiliary Russians, was slowly bending his steps. Meanwhile the Archduke Ferdinand more rapidly descended the left bank, and in the middle of May appeared before Thorn. In the course of this movement, Poniatowsky obtained intelligence that an Austrian division had crossed over to the right bank of the Vistula, and lay unsupported at Ostrowek in front of Gora. Rapidly concentrating a superior force, he suddenly attacked the enemy, routed them, and made fifteen hundred prisoners. Thus the opposing armies mutually passed and crossed each other: Poniatowsky, relying on the support of the Russians, menaced Galicia and the Austrian provinces; while the Austrians penetrated to the Lower Vistula, raised the standard of insurrection in the old Prussian provinces, and threatened Dantzic itself.¹

May 14.

May 15.

¹ Pel. iii. 63,
71. Thib.
vii. 309,
310. Jom.
iv. 238.
Bign. viii.
210.

An event occurred in the course of this expedition of

the Archduke Ferdinand's light troops across the Vistula, attended in the end with more important consequences than any other in the Polish campaign. In pursuing the Austrians on the right bank of the river, a courier was taken by the Poles with despatches from the Russian general Gortschakoff, who lay with his division at Brzesc, to the Archduke, in which he congratulated him on his victory at Razyn and capture of Warsaw, expressed hopes for his ulterior success, and breathed a wish that he might soon join his arms to the Austrian eagles. This letter was immediately forwarded to Napoleon, who received it at Schönbrunn in the end of May. He was highly indignant at the discovery, and transmitted the letter without delay to St Petersburg, accompanied by a peremptory demand for an explanation. The Russian cabinet hastened to make every reparation in their power: Gortschakoff's letter was disavowed, and he himself recalled from his command; while CHERNICHEFF, the aide-de-camp to Alexander, who was the military *chargé-d'affaires* for the Czar at the headquarters of the French Emperor, exerted all his skill to remove the unfavourable impression produced by this unlucky discovery. Napoleon, who, after the battle of Aspern, had no need of another powerful enemy on his hands, feigned to be satisfied, and the approach of the Russian troops to the theatre of war, soon after, caused the affair to be hushed up. He had wished that the Russians should have marched on Dresden to overawe Prussia; but to this the Czar would not consent, and Napoleon was obliged to feign consent to their advance into Galicia. Alexander accompanied this with a proposal that, in the event of the allied armies proving successful, Galicia should be ceded to Russia; but to this Napoleon would not accede. The two potentates were already irrevocably alienated.¹ The impression made on Napoleon's mind was never effaced: he saw that the ascendant of Tilsit was at an end, and frequently repeated to those in his immediate

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

61.

Discovery
of the secret
leaning of
the Russians
towards
Austria.

¹ Sav. iv. 92,
93. Pel. iii.
71. 72. Thib.
viii. 310.
Bigu. viii.
244.

CHAP.
LVIII.

confidence, "I see that, after all, I must make war on Alexander."

1809.
62.

Great dis-
trust it ex-
cited in the
mind of
Napoleon.

Conversing at Ebersdorf on this subject with Savary, who was in a peculiar manner admitted to his inmost thoughts, from having been formerly ambassador at St Petersburg, he said, "I was perfectly in the right not to trust to such allies. What worse could have happened if I had not made peace with the Russians? What have I gained by their alliance? It is more than probable that they would have declared openly against me, if a remnant of regard to the faith of treaties had not prevented them. We must not deceive ourselves; they have all fixed a rendezvous on my tomb; but they have not courage openly to set out thither. That the Emperor Alexander should not come to my assistance is conceivable; but that he should permit Warsaw to be taken, in presence almost of his army, is indeed hardly credible: it is plain that I can no longer reckon on an alliance in that quarter. Perhaps he thinks he does me a great favour by not declaring war: by my faith! if I had entertained any doubt on that subject before engaging in the affairs of Spain, I should have cared very little for the part which he took. And yet, after all, they will probably say that I am wanting to my engagements, and cannot remain at peace." The instructions of Napoleon to Caulaincourt at this period accordingly were, to appear satisfied, to make no complaint, but to regard all his former instructions as annulled.^{1*}

¹ Savary, iv.
92, 93. Bign.
viii. 247.

The most important political event, however, which

* " 'Le cœur de l'Empereur est blessé,' disait M. de Champagny au Duc de Vicence, dans une dépêche du 2 Juin: 'il n'écrit pas à cause de cela à l'Empereur Alexandre. Il ne peut pas témoigner une confiance qu'il n'éprouve plus: il ne dit rien, il ne se plaint pas. Quarante mille hommes dans le duché de Varsovie auraient rendu un véritable service. Regardez comme annulées vos anciennes instructions. Paraissez satisfait; mais ne prenez aucun engagement. Par cela même que l'Empereur ne croit plus à l'alliance de la Russie, il lui importe d'avantage que cette erreur, dont il est desabusés, soit partagée par toute l'Europe.'"—M. DE CHAMPAGNY *au* DUC DE VICENCE, 2 *Juin* 1809; BIGNON, viii. 247.

flowed from the battle of Aspern was the commencement of a secret negotiation between Austria and Prussia, which, though from the tardiness of England unsuccessful at that juncture, was not without its effect in future times, and showed that the ancient jealousies which had wrought such wonders for French supremacy were fast giving way under the pressure of common danger. Even before that great event, a vague correspondence had been kept up between the two courts; and in consequence of distant overtures transmitted, first through the Count de Goltz, and subsequently through the Prince of Orange, Colonel Steigenstesch had been sent by the cabinet of Vienna to Königsberg, where the King of Prussia then was, with a letter from the Emperor of Austria, in which he earnestly invited that monarch to declare openly for the common cause, and enter upon a concerted plan of military operations. Early in June the Emperor of Austria, in reply to a letter of the King of Prussia, wrote to the cabinet of Berlin, announcing that "the bearer was authorised to regulate the proportions of the forces to be employed on both sides, and the other arrangements not less salutary than indispensable for the security of the two states, in conformity with the overtures made by Count de Goltz." The proposals of Colonel Steigenstesch were, that as the war in which they were now engaged was of such a kind as was likely to decide for ever the fate of the respective monarchies, they should become bound to support each other with their whole forces; that the general direction of the campaign should be intrusted to the Imperial generalissimo; that they should mutually engage not to enter into a separate negotiation; and that the peace to be ultimately concluded should embrace not only their own, but the interests of the adjoining states. These propositions were warmly supported by Scharnhorst and Blücher, and the whole war or patriotic party in the Prussian dominions. The former offered in a fortnight's time to have fifty, in a month a hundred and twenty thousand

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

63.
Secret ne-
gotiation
between
Austria and
Prussia.

June 8.

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LVIII.

1809.

¹ Stadion to
Wusser-
berg, June
9, 1809.
Hard. x.
321, 325.
Thib. vii.
306, 307.

disciplined soldiers under arms : he assured the King of secret intelligence which would secure for him, on the first signal of hostilities, Magdeburg and several other important fortresses ; and strongly supported the justice of Count Stadion's opinion, so clearly expressed in his despatch, that the fate of Prussia was inseparably wound up with that of Austria, and that the two monarchies must stand or fall together.¹

64.
The exorbi-
tant de-
mands of
Prussia
cause it
to fail.

On this occasion, the cupidity and exorbitant demands of the Prussian cabinet again marred the prospect of a European alliance, and prolonged for four years longer the chains and misery of their country. Still clinging to the idea that victory must be clearly pronounced before they declared themselves, and that they might turn to some good account the dangers and distresses of Austria, the Prussian government replied, that they had every disposition to assist the cabinet of Vienna, but that they were in want alike of arms, ammunition, and money ; that they could not take a part in the contest till the views of Russia in regard to it were known ; and that they must have the guarantee of a treaty for the intentions of Austria, in the event of success, before they took a place by her side. To the envoy of the Imperial government, however, it was insinuated that "a great stroke would determine the irresolution of the cabinet of Berlin ;" but that, in that event, they would expect not merely the restoration of all the Prussian provinces of Poland, but also *Austria's share in the partition*, Anspach, Baireuth, a part of Saxony, and various lesser provinces, ceded at different times to France or other powers. It was, of course, beyond Colonel Steigenstesch's powers to accede to such extravagant demands : they were referred, with the proposal for a separate treaty, to the cabinet of Vienna ; and meanwhile the negotiation, notwithstanding all the care of those engaged in it, to a certain degree transpired. A joint requisition was made by the ministers of France and Russia for a communication of the proposals

June 23.

of Austria ; and although this inconvenient demand was eluded at the moment, Steigenstesch was obliged to quit Berlin, and before diplomatic relations could be established in any other channel, of which the King of Prussia still held out the prospect, the battle of Wagram had taken place, and Austria, beset on all sides, and unsupported by any Continental power, was driven to a separate accommodation.¹

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

¹ Thib. vii.
308, 309.
Jom. ii. 41.
Hard. x.
326.

Affairs wore a menacing aspect for the interests of Napoleon in more distant parts of his vast dominions. England, seeming to rise in vigour and resources as the contest advanced, was making her giant strength be felt in more than one quarter of Europe. Wellington had again landed in Portugal; the consternation produced by the Corunna retreat had passed away; and Soult, defeated on the banks of the Douro, had with difficulty escaped from the north of Lusitania by the sacrifice of all his artillery and baggage. The Spanish armies were again assembling in the south of Castile; large forces were collecting in the plains of la Mancha; and everything indicated that, ere long, a formidable demonstration against the Spanish capital would be made by the united English and Peninsular forces. A considerable expedition was preparing in the harbours of Sicily to transport a large body of English and Sicilian troops into the south of Italy, where it was well known their presence would speedily produce a general insurrection. This was the more to be dreaded, notwithstanding the well-known imbecility of the Italians in military operations, that the recent annexation of the whole Ecclesiastical States to the French empire had aroused, as might have been expected, the most vehement hostility on the part of the Roman See and its numerous adherents in the Italian states. At the same time General Miollis, the French governor of Rome, had so small a force at his command that it would be compelled, in all probability, to yield to the first summons of the Anglo-Sicilian forces. Lastly, the

65.
Operations
in Italy,
and diversion
from
Sicily.

May 17.

CHAP.
LVIII.
1809.

English, not content with their exertions in other quarters, were, it was well known, preparing an expedition of unprecedented magnitude in the harbours of the Channel: fame had magnified to a hundred thousand armed men and forty sail of the line the forces to be employed on the occasion; the Scheldt, the Elbe, the Seine itself, were alternately assigned as the probable destination of this gigantic armament; and Napoleon, with all his resources, was too clear-sighted not to perceive that he might ere long be overmatched by the strength of a more formidable confederacy than he had yet encountered; that the English standards would soon rouse the might of northern Germany into mortal hostility; and that a second reverse on the shores of the Danube would at once dissolve his splendid dominion, and bring the forces of Europe in appalling strength to the banks of the Rhine.*

66.
Situation
and pros-
pects of
Napoleon
after the
battle of
Aspern.
The Duke
of Brun-
swick takes
Dresden.

June 1.

The impression produced over the Continent by the battle of Aspern was immense. It dissipated in a great degree the charm of Napoleon's invincibility; and, more even than the dubious carnage of Eylau, diffused a general hope that the miseries of foreign domination were approaching their termination, and that a second victory over the remains of the French army, now shut up in the island of Lobau, would at once restore freedom to an injured world. While the English nation abandoned themselves to transports of joy at the prospects which were thus dawning upon Europe, active endeavours were made by Austria to turn to the best account the extraordinary prosperous change which had taken place in their fortunes. Not discouraged by the failure of former attempts to rouse the north of Germany, the Duke of Brunswick-Oels again advanced from Zittau, at the head of his gallant band of volunteers, towards Westphalia; while a considerable body of Imperial landwehr from Bohemia, under General Amende, invaded Saxony; and another, under Radivojivich, five thousand strong, overran

* See Chaps. LX. and LXI. where the events here alluded to are narrated.

Franconia and penetrated to Baireuth. The forces remaining in that kingdom, the bulk of which had been drawn under Bernadotte to the banks of the Danube, were in no condition to oppose this irruption; and the royal family, flying from their dominions, took refuge in France. Dresden and Leipsic were occupied by the Austrian troops; Baireuth and Bamberg fell into their hands; the insurrection spread over all Franconia and Suabia; symptoms of disaffection were breaking out in Saxony and Westphalia; and a chain of Austrian posts, extending from the Elbe, by Nuremberg and Stockach, to the mountains of the Tyrol, entirely cut off the communication between France and the Grand Army. Meanwhile, the most energetic appeals were made everywhere by the Austrian commanders to the people of their own and all the adjoining countries, to take up arms; while Napoleon, weakened by a disastrous battle on the banks of the Danube, could maintain himself only by a concentration of all his forces under the walls of Vienna.¹

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

June 12.

June 22.

¹ Pel. iv. 18,
22, 26.
Hard. x.
393, 394.

“Germans!” said the Duke of Brunswick, “will you continue to combat Germans? Will you, whose mothers, wives, and sisters have been outraged by the French, shed your blood in their defence? It is your brothers who now invoke you—come to break your fetters—to avenge the liberty of Germany! To arms, then, Hessians, Prussians, Brunswickers, Hanoverians! all who bear the honourable name of Germans, unite for the deliverance of your fatherland, to wipe away its shame and avenge its wrongs. Rise to deliver your country from a disgraceful yoke, under which it has so long groaned. The day of its emancipation has arrived: none more favourable can ever be desired.”—“Aspern,” said General Radivojovich, who had penetrated into Franconia, and occupied Baireuth with five thousand men from Egra, in Bohemia—“Aspern has destroyed the invincibility of Napoleon! Arm yourselves for the cause of liberty, of justice, of Austria, to deliver Europe and the human race.”—“You

67.

Proclamation and energetic proceedings of the Duke of Brunswick.

CHAP.
LVIII.

1809.

combat," said Noditz, one of the chiefs of the Tugendbund, to the Prussians of Baireuth, "in order to restore your country to your beloved King." The Duke of Brunswick's volunteers wore a light-blue uniform, with a death's head and cross-bones on their cloaks, to indicate the mortal hostility in which they were engaged, from whence they acquired the name of the *Death's Head Hussars*. The officers were distinguished from the privates, in a corps where all were respectable, only by a small cross on their arms. The Duke himself was as simply dressed as any of his followers: he shared their fare—slept beside them on the ground—underwent their fatigues. These martial qualities, joined to the ascendant of a noble figure and unconquerable intrepidity, so won the hearts of his followers, that they disdained to desert him even in the wreck of the fortunes of Germany, after the battle of Wagram; followed his standard with dauntless confidence across all Westphalia and Hanover, embarked in safety for England, and lived, as will appear in the sequel, to flesh their swords in the best blood of France on the field of Waterloo.¹

¹ Hard. x.
392, 394.
Pel. iv. 26,
27.

CHAPTER LIX.

CAMPAIGN OF WAGRAM.

BOTH the military and political position of Napoleon was now full of peril; and it was obvious to all the world, that a single false step, one additional defeat, would expose him to certain ruin. But it was precisely in such circumstances that his genius shone forth with the brightest lustre, and that he was most likely by a sudden blow to reinstate his affairs, and overturn all the calculations of his enemies. No man ever saw so clearly where was the decisive point of the campaign, or so firmly made up his mind to relinquish all minor advantages, in order to accumulate his forces upon that vital quarter where defeat to his antagonists would prove certain ruin. In doing so, he followed the natural bent of his genius, which was never inclined to owe to combination what could be effected by audacity: but he was powerfully aided by the despotic nature of the authority which he wielded, and the irresponsible character of the command with which he was invested. Many other generals might have seen equally clearly the policy of concentrating all their strength for a blow at the heart of their adversary's power, without possessing either the power to effect such a concentration, or the independence of others necessary to incur its responsibility. In the present instance, he saw at once that the vital point of the war was to be found under the walls of Vienna;

CHAP.
LIX.

1809.

1.

Views and
policy of
Napoleon
at this jun-
cture.

CHAP.
LIX.

1809.

and that, if he could succeed in defeating the Archduke Charles on the plain of the Marchfeld, he need not disquiet himself either about the victories of the Tyrolese in their Alpine valleys, the insurrection of the Germans on the banks of the Elbe, or the distant thunder of the English on the shores of the Scheldt. Fixing all his attention, therefore, upon the restoration of the bridges, the concentration of his forces, and the reanimating of his soldiers in the centre, he gave himself little concern about the tardy movements of the coalition upon the vast circumference of the theatre of hostilities; and wrote to his lieutenants only to keep open the communications of the Grand Army with the Rhine, and he would soon find the means of dissipating the host of enemies who were now accumulating round his extremities.¹*

¹ Pel. iv. 76,
77. Sav. iv.
94. Jom. iii.
246, 247.

2.
Forces of
Napoleon in
the island
of Lobau.
May 25.

The force which remained at the disposal of the French Emperor, even after the very serious losses of the battle of Aspern, was still immense. The chasms produced by that disastrous engagement had been more than supplied by the opportune arrival of Eugene's army at the Imperial headquarters; while the corresponding forces of the Archduke John were, for the time at least, lost to the Austrian generals by that prince having retreated to the Hungarian plains, instead of obeying his instructions and menacing the French communications from the Tyrolese mountains.† From the confidential correspondence of Napoleon with Berthier at this period, which has since been published, it appears that, in the beginning of June, the Grand Army numbered, present with the eagles, no less than one hundred and

* On the 6th June, Napoleon wrote from Schönbrunn to Marshal Kellermann, who commanded the army of reserve in the north of Germany. "Before the enemy can have accomplished anything of essential importance in Saxony, the Emperor will have passed the Danube, and be on their rear. But a corps which should approach the line of communication of the Grand Army might prove really dangerous: far more so than anything which could occur in the north of Germany."—*NAPOLÉON to KELLERMANN, June 6, 1809; PELET, iv. 77, 78.*

† *Ante, Chap. LVII. § 25.*

ten thousand infantry, and twenty-four thousand horse, with four hundred pieces of cannon: in all, including the artillerymen, mustering at least a hundred and fifty thousand combatants. This was independent of the corps of Marmont in Dalmatia, of Vandamme in echelon in the rear towards Bavaria, of Lefebvre in the Tyrol, and of Macdonald in Styria. After making every deduction for the portions of these different corps which might be requisite to keep open the rear, and maintain the communications, at least fifty thousand men might be ordered up to support the Grand Army: and thus, after deducting for the sick and absent, a hundred and eighty thousand men could be assembled in a month's time under the walls of Vienna, of whom thirty thousand were cavalry, with six hundred pieces of cannon: a greater force, if the quality and equipment of the troops is taken into consideration, than had ever in the world before been assembled in a single battle. Nor was this all; immediately in their rear they had a fortified capital amply stored with provisions, and containing abundant supplies of all sorts for the use of the army; and the great arsenal of the Austrian monarchy, overflowing with artillery, arms, ammunition, pontoons, and every species of equipment that could be desired for the most extensive military operations.¹

The inhabitants of the other countries of Europe, electrified by the intelligence of the battle of Aspern, and the retreat of the French army into the island of Lobau, entertained the most sanguine hopes that they would immediately be assailed there by the victorious Austrians, and either driven to the right bank of the Danube, and forced to evacuate the capital, or compelled to lay down their arms in that crowded and untenable position. Possibly, if the Archduke Charles had been aware of the magnitude of the losses which the French army had sustained, and the almost total exhaustion of their ammunition, he might, on the day after the battle,

CHAP.
LIX.
1809.

¹ Pel. iv. 77,
78. Jom.
iii. 246.
Stat. 233,
236.

3.
Forces and
views of the
Archduke
Charles at
the same
junction.

CHAP.
LIX.

1809.

have made good a descent upon the island, and achieved the most glorious success. Such an enterprise, however, would at best have been attended with considerable hazard ; for, although the French actually in the island on the morning after the battle did not exceed forty thousand men, yet an equal force was under the command of Davoust on the right bank around Vienna, and thirty thousand more under Vandamme and Bernadotte were only a few marches in the rear from St Polten to Lintz. On the other hand, the Imperialists, exhausted by the fatigues of a battle of two days' duration of unexampled severity, and weakened by the loss of nearly twenty-five thousand killed and wounded in the strife, were too happy to have escaped without destruction from so dreadful a contest, to think of immediately recommencing active operations. The force at the command of the Archduke, though rapidly augmenting, was not at first, after the battle, very considerable. Fifty thousand of the warriors who had borne a part in the glorious strife alone remained unhurt ; Kollowrath might soon bring up twenty thousand more from Lintz ; and when the fatal detour of the Archduke John was completed, he, it was hoped, would be able to add thirty thousand veteran troops from the Hungarian plains. Thus a hundred thousand regular troops, of which about twenty thousand were cavalry, might be reckoned on for the great battle which was to decide the fate of the monarchy ; and as this force would probably be swelled by fifty thousand landwehr, or reserves from the eastern and northern provinces of the monarchy, before the end of June, the forces on the opposite sides were not materially different, so far as numerical strength went. And even the superior number of regular and veteran soldiers in the French ranks might be considered as compensated by the advantage which the German host derived from the homogeneous quality of its troops, the animation with which they were inspired in behalf of their country,¹ and

¹ Pel. iv. 78, and Appen-
dix, table
2d. Vict.
et Cong.
xix. 127.
Jom. iii.
245.

the enthusiasm which they generally felt at the glorious result of the late memorable battle in which they had been engaged.

CHAP.
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While remaining in a state of apparent inactivity at Schönbrunn, Napoleon's attention was chiefly directed to three objects. First, the converting the island of Lobau into a vast fortress, rendered impregnable to attack by a plentiful array of heavy artillery, and connected with the right bank by strong bridges, from whence he might at any moment issue forth to attack the Archduke Charles, and at the same time find a secure refuge in case of disaster. Next, the securing and keeping open his communication with the Rhine, by means of a chain of posts, occupied by strong detachments, and a skilful disposition of the troops of the Rhenish confederacy, under Lefebvre, Bernadotte, and Vandamme, all along the menaced districts in the valley of the Danube. Lastly, the clearing his right flank of the enemy, driving the Archduke John still farther into the Hungarian plains, and throwing back upon the left flank the corps which the Austrian generalissimo was pushing forward to endeavour to open up a communication with the Italian army. To accomplish these various objects, however, and at the same time retain a sufficient number of troops at headquarters to keep the great and rapidly increasing army of the Archduke Charles in check, required an immense accumulation of forces. Every effort, therefore, was made to strengthen the Grand Army. Marmont received orders to hasten his march from Dalmatia with his whole corps; Macdonald, with his numerous divisions of the Italian army, was directed to advance from Styria;^{1*} and the most pressing instructions were sent to the rear to order up every man and horse

4.
Napoleon's
projects for
crossing the
Danube.

¹ Pel. iv. 77,
78. Stut.
240, 242.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
126.

* To such perfection were the movements of these distant and numerous bodies brought, that on each despatch was marked the hour and minute when the courier set out, with the hour when the troops were required to be at the general rendezvous in the island of Lobau; and they all arrived, many from the distance of some hundred miles, at the precise time assigned to them.—SAVARY, iv. 99.

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5.

Prodigious
works exe-
cuted in the
island of
Lobau by
the French
Emperor.

that could be spared from the depots and garrisons in the interior, to the headquarters of the Grand Army.

The works in the island of Lobau were of the most gigantic description, and still remain an enduring monument of the great designs of the Emperor Napoleon, and the persevering energy and skill of his engineers. Never, since the days of the Romans, had constructions so vast been erected in the field in presence of the enemy. Three solid bridges connected that important island with the right bank of the Danube; and, in addition to these, a fourth ran across all the islands from shore to shore, over an extent of two hundred and forty fathoms. The most extraordinary pains were taken to render this bridge secure against the misfortune which had befallen the former one. Immediately above the bridge of boats was one on piles, which served as a barrier both against the violence of the current, and the machinations of the enemy; and close adjoining to it on the other side, one on pontoons, which also contributed to the strength of the whole, and served as an additional line of passage for the columns of infantry and light chariots. Both extremities of these bridges were fortified by strong *têtes-du-pont*; that on the northern end, where it was exposed to the attacks of the enemy, soon became a complete fortress, with rampart, wet ditches, ravelins, and lunettes, armed with eighty pieces of heavy cannon, drawn from the arsenal of Vienna. All the prominent points of the intermediate islands were also fortified and mounted with artillery; and boats were collected and manned by marines brought from Brest by the provident foresight of the Emperor, before the opening of the campaign, to be in readiness to intercept and turn aside any fire-ships or loaded barks that might be directed against the bridge by the enemy. The Emperor was indefatigable in urging forward these important operations.¹ Every day, for the first fortnight, he was to be seen in the island of Lobau, animating the men, conversing with the engineers direct-

¹ Vict. et.
Conq. xix.
199. Pel.
iv. 79, 80.
Sav. iv. 98,
99.

ing the works ; and such was the vigour which his presence and exertions inspired into his followers, that, in a fortnight after the battle of Aspern, the fortifications were beyond the reach of the enemy's attack, and in a month they were entirely finished.*

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Immense as these preparations were, it was not to them alone that the Emperor trusted for the grand operation of crossing the river. He was well aware that such gigantic works would speedily fix the attention of the enemy ; and he daily beheld rising before his eyes vast intrenchments running through Essling and Enzersdorf, by which the Austrians hoped to bar the entrance to the Marchfeld from the bridge, and confine the enemy within the fortifications they had constructed. Like the vast armament of armed gun-boats, collected in 1805 on the shores of the Channel, these great operations were intended only to mask his hidden designs, and conceal from the enemy the real point of attack. While these prodigious bridges and fortifications attracted all the attention of the Austrians to the anticipated passage in front of Essling, there were secretly collected in one of the narrow channels behind the island of Lobau, in a situation entirely concealed from the enemy, the materials for three other bridges over the narrow arm of the river which separated that island from the northern bank, and which were so constructed that they could be transported and put together with extraordinary celerity. One of these bridges was composed of a single piece, sixty

6.
Hidden real
designs of
the Emperor
as to the
point of
passage.

* During this momentous period, the care of the Emperor extended in an especial manner to the comfort and interests of his soldiers. Walking one day with his marshals on the shores of the isle of Lobau, he passed a company of grenadiers seated at their dinner. "Well, my friends," said Napoleon, "I hope you find the wine good."—"It will not make us drunk," replied one of their number ; "there is our cellar"—pointing to the Danube. The Emperor, who had ordered a distribution of a bottle of wine to each man, was surprised, and promised an immediate inquiry. Berthier instantly set it on foot, and it turned out that forty thousand bottles sent by the Emperor a few days before for the army, had been purloined and sold by some of the commissaries. They were immediately brought to trial, and condemned to be shot.—*Victoires et Conquêtes*, xix. 200.

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fathoms in length ; the second, of the materials of the old bridge which had given way on the 22d May, reconstructed with more skill ; the third, of boats and pontoons drawn from the arsenal of Vienna. The first of these bridges was justly considered so wonderful a piece of art, that a model of it is still preserved in Paris, in the Hall of the Conservatory of Objects of Art. The intention of the Emperor was, that these bridges should be thrown across the arm of the Danube which separates Lobau from the opposite shore, considerably farther down than the great bridge in front of Essling, and in such a situation as to take all the Austrian defences in rear. Thus the three fixed bridges from the southern bank to the island of Lobau, secured the passage of the troops and artillery into that important station ; the great bridge from thence to the *tête-du-pont*, on the northern bank, attracted all the attention of the enemy to that point, while the movable bridges, prepared in secret in the channels behind, were adapted to throw the troops speedily across, in a situation where they were not expected, and where they would find themselves in the rear of the whole Austrian intrenchments. To cover the latter design, and at the same time distract the attention of the enemy, preparations as if for a passage were made both at Nussdorf and Spitz, on the upper part of the river above the islands ; while the whole semicircular shore of the island of Lobau, fronting the northern bank, was lined with heavy artillery drawn from the arsenal of Vienna, and a hundred and twenty pieces of cannon, disposed on every headland along the wide circumference, were prepared to cover the formation of the new bridges, and bewilder the Imperialists by their wide-extended fire.¹

¹ Sav. iv.
99. Pel.
iv. 79, 83.
Stat. 240,
246.

While Napoleon was engaged in these great undertakings, the Austrians on their part were not idle. Directly opposite to the end of the main bridge, where the attack was anticipated, the Archduke Charles erected

a vast line of intrenchments, which, running from Aspern across the former field of battle and through Essling, terminated on the banks of the Danube at Enzersdorf. These immense works, consisting of field redoubts and ravelins, united by a curtain, were strengthened by palisades all along their front, and armed with a hundred and fifty pieces of heavy artillery. The bulk of the Austrian army was stationed about a league in the rear, along the course of the little stream, the Russbach, which provided water for the prodigious multitude. Tranquil behind his formidable intrenchments, the Archduke quietly awaited the course of events; while his army hourly received accessions of strength, and improved in discipline and efficiency. The veterans recovered from their fatigues, burnished their arms, and instructed the young soldiers, who were daily flocking to the camp, in the rudiments of the military art: the chasms in the cavalry and artillery were filled up by numerous supplies from Hungary and Transylvania, where vast public establishments for the breeding of horses had been brought to the highest perfection;* the wounded in great numbers rejoined their ranks; the artillery was augmented to a degree hitherto unheard-of in war; and, before the end of June, a hundred and forty thousand men, of whom twenty-five thousand were splendid cavalry, with seven hundred pieces of cannon, were assembled round the Austrian standards, all animated by their recent victory with a degree of spirit and enthusiasm never before witnessed in the Imperial armies.¹

The situation of the respective parties required that the principal attention of the French should be turned to the preservation of their communications clear with the Rhine, and of the Germans to the maintenance of their

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7.
Defensive
preparations
of the Aus-
trians.

¹ Stat. 252,
288. Vict. et
Conq. xix.
197, 198.
Pel. iv. 82,
83.

* A very interesting account of these vast establishments is given in the first volume of Marshal Marmont's Travels in Hungary and Turkey; a work which proves that that veteran commander unites the eye of an experienced observer to the warmth of a philanthropist and the judgment of a practical statesman.—See MARMONT, *Voyage dans l'Orient*, i. 232, and ii. 116.

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8.

Efforts of
Napoleon to
clear his
rear and
flanks.Atlas,
Plate 11.

July 2.

July 7.

¹ Pel. iv. 83,
89. Jom.
iii. 246.
Stat. 260,
262.

9.

The French
are checked
in their at-
tempts to
force a pas-
sage at
Presburg.

connexion with the eastern provinces of the empire, where the forces of the monarchy were still untouched, and the great armament called the Hungarian insurrection was daily acquiring a more complete consistency. For this purpose, Napoleon issued the most pressing orders to Bourcier and Rouyer to reopen, with all the forces of the Confederation which they could assemble, the great road to the Rhine, and, neglecting all minor objects, to concentrate their whole troops upon that vital line of communication. At the same time Kellermann, who was soon afterwards succeeded by Junot, was directed to strain every nerve for the accumulation of an imposing force, under the denomination of the Army of Observation of the Elbe, at Frankfort, and drive the Imperialists from their threatening positions at Baireuth and Nuremberg. These directions were promptly obeyed. Early in July, Junot advanced into Franconia and Saxony on the one side, while Jerome, relieved by the destruction of Schill's corps from domestic danger, threatened them on the other. The Duke of Brunswick, with the Austrian commander, was obliged to retire into the Bohemian mountains; while Augsburg and Ratisbon were retaken by the national guards of Würtemberg and Baden, and the line of communication both with Strassburg and Frankfort was reopened to the Grand Army.¹

More important operations followed the attempts of the Austrians to regain, by the circuitous route of Presburg and the east, their communication with the Archduke John and the Hungarian insurrection. The Archduke Charles occupied, with the corps of Bianchi, the town of Presburg, situated six leagues below Vienna, on the left bank of the river, with a *tête-du-pont* commanding the bridge at that place over the Danube. Desirous of dislodging the enemy from this important post, which gave them the means of manœuvring on both banks of the river, and of turning his right flank, Napoleon directed Davoust to march against it. He found the *tête-du-pont*

unfinished, and his troops tried to carry it by a *coup-de-main*: but the sustained fire of the Austrian works repulsed them with loss; while the arm of the Danube, twenty toises in breadth, which separated them from the isles occupied by the Imperialists, flowing in a rapid current, rendered it impossible for them to dislodge the enemy from his advanced posts in the river. However, by occupying in force with two strong divisions the village of Engerau, immediately opposite to the southern extremity of the bridge, he rendered the possession of it unavailing to his antagonists; and soon after, the rapid succession of more important events in other quarters, deprived this point of the importance which apparently belonged to it.¹

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1809.
June 3.

¹ Pel. iv. 87,
89. Jom. iii.
246. Stat.
246, 248.

The Archduke John, in retiring from Carniola into Hungary, had taken with him part of the landwehr of that province, and detached Giulay into Croatia, where it was hoped he could maintain himself, lest these detached bodies should fall into the enemy's hands, who had now overrun Carniola. With these forces united to his own, he retired to Kormend in Hungary, which is on the right of the Danube; so that he was in the disadvantageous situation of being separated by that river from the main Austrian army, and exposed to any accumulations of force which Napoleon, on his side of the river, might choose to direct against him. He had the advantage, however, of having the communication open in his rear with the reinforcements which were expected from the Hungarian insurrection; and, in the middle of June, he formed a junction with his brother the Archduke Palatine, who commanded that irregular force, at RAAB. Their united forces amounted to twenty-two thousand regular troops, and eighteen thousand of the insurrection; and they took post in a strong position on the ridges which lie in front of that town. Their right rested on the village of Szabadghedy, and the heights of the same name; their left was covered by a morass;

10.
Retreat of
the Arch-
duke John
to Raab,
and position
which he
took up
there.

June 13.

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1809.

their centre ran through the farm of Kismeyger ; numerous light horse were disposed along the front of the line, while a thousand chosen troops occupied a square stone edifice still farther in advance of the centre, which was loopholed, and strengthened by a few works, besides a deep rivulet, which formed a sort of natural fosse to the post. In this position the Archduke John resolved to give battle to the enemy, under Eugene Beauharnais, who were now coming up in great strength from the west ; although he had just received a despatch from his brother, the generalissimo, containing the sage instructions, by no means to fight in the open plain, but to throw himself into the intrenched camp in his rear, under the cannon of Raab ; to blend the inexperienced levies with the veteran troops, and accustom them to military discipline before he trusted them against the enemy ; to keep open his communication with the main army at Essling, and detach seven thousand men to Presburg for that purpose ; and to fight only in the event of the enemy forcing the passage of the Raab, and menacing the left of the intrenched camp. These wise counsels and express injunctions were alike disregarded ; the officers of the Archduke John's staff being unwilling to forego the brilliant results which they anticipated from a battle, and he himself reluctant, by placing his force under the immediate direction of his brother, to lose the lustre of a separate command.¹

¹ Pel. iv. 90,
95, Jom. iv.
247, 248.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
172, 173.
Stat. 250,
256.

11.
Battle of
Raab.
June 14.

The day following, being the 14th June, was the anniversary of the battle of Marengo : the Viceroy was naturally anxious to combat on that auspicious day, and the Austrian generals made no attempt to frustrate his designs. At ten o'clock the signal for battle was given, and the French advanced with enthusiasm to the attack. Grenier commanded the centre ; Baraguay d'Hilliers the left ; Montbrun, with the light cavalry, and Grouchy, with the heavy dragoons, were on the right ; Pacthod with his numerous division was in reserve, behind the centre and

left. Eugene formed his troops in columns of division in echelon, the right in advance ; but, before the action had become serious, that order was abandoned by the rapid advance of the centre and left, and the battle became general in parallel lines. His forces were about thirty-five thousand in number, inferior by five thousand to those of the enemy ; but this disadvantage was more than compensated by the experienced character of the men, while nearly half of those opposed to them were raw levies or volunteers who had never encountered a hostile fire. The first troops which came into action were those of Serras, which attacked the square building in advance of Kismeyger. The Austrians were speedily driven within the walls ; but there they made a desperate resistance, and, while numbers of the assailants fell under the fatal fire from the loopholes, others sank in the deep marshes of the rivulet, which on three sides encircled the building. In a few minutes seven hundred men perished in this disastrous manner, without one of the defences of the place being carried by the assailants. While success was thus arrested around this formidable post, the village of Kismeyger in its rear was menaced by Durutte, who, with a chosen division of infantry, had advanced through the open ground between its houses and the buildings of Szabadghedy, and had already got abreast of the former. But he was there met by the fire of a battery of twelve pieces, the grapeshot from which made wide chasms in his line ; and the Austrians, profiting by the hesitation occasioned by this unexpected discharge, made a vigorous onset, which drove back the whole centre in disorder ; while at the same time Baraguay d'Hilliers, with his Italian division on the left, checked by the murderous fire which issued from the village of Szabadghedy, was also forced to give ground, and already the cries of victory were heard along the whole of that part of the Austrian line.¹

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¹ 19th Bull.
Monit. 23d
June 1809.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
175, 176.
Jom. iii. 248,
249. Pelet,
iv. 95, 105.

Eugene saw that the decisive moment had arrived,

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LIX.1809.
12.Varied suc-
cess, but
final victory
of the Vice-
roy.

and he hastened to the spot to arrest the disorder. He instantly addressed a few words to the flying Italians, exhorted them to remember their victories and their glory, and, what was still more to the purpose, brought forward the reserve, under General Pacthod, consisting almost entirely of French troops, to their support. The arrival of these veterans changed the face of the day. The Italians, reanimated by this seasonable support, returned to the charge; the centre and right of the enemy were forced, and Szabadghedy was carried. Upon this the Archduke John brought up his reserve, consisting of the flower of his army; Szabadghedy was recaptured, and the Italians driven back in confusion. Again Durutte and Pacthod made good their entrance, and a third time the Imperialists expelled them at the point of the bayonet. In following up this last attack, however, the Hungarian new levies extended themselves too far, deeming victory secure, and thinking to outflank their opponents. The experienced French generals saw their error, and returned to the charge with their troops in column, carried, and finally retained the village which had been so obstinately contested, and threw the whole centre and right of the enemy into confusion. Meanwhile a furious combat of horse was going forward on the Austrian left, where Montbrun and Grouchy were opposed to the whole weight of the Hungarian horse. This formidable body of cavalry, seven thousand strong, in the first instance overwhelmed Montbrun and his division, who had advanced to support the brigade of Colbert, which was endeavouring to turn the square farm-house in front, which still prolonged its defence. But Grouchy came up with his terrible cuirassiers, and charged the enemy, when blown by their pursuit, with such vigour, that they were driven back so far as to leave the heroic defenders of that now isolated post entirely to their own resources.¹

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xix.
175, 176.
Pel. iv. 97,
99. Jom.
iii. 248, 249.
Stat. 258.
264. Monit.
23d June.

Though thus left in the middle, as it were, of the French

army, Hammel and the heroic defenders of the farm-house abated nothing of their resolution. Irritated at this prolonged opposition, Serras prepared a new attack : he himself, with his whole division, assailed it on one side, while Roussel, with a fresh brigade, recommenced the attack in front. Nothing could resist this last assault ; surrounded on all sides, the walls of the building were carried by escalade, the doors cut down by redoubled strokes of the hatchet, and the infuriated soldiery rushed into the building. A frightful massacre began. In the tumult the beams took fire ; the flames spread with extraordinary rapidity, and, amidst the death-struggle between the French and Austrians, the roof fell in with a tremendous crash, and all within, friends and foes, perished. This decisive success established Eugene in a solid manner in the village of Kismeyger and centre of the enemy, who now fought only to secure his retreat. It was conducted with more order than could have been expected after so desperate a struggle, and the Archduke took refuge under the cannon of Komorn, abandoning the intrenched camp of Raab, which was immediately evacuated by some battalions of the Hungarian insurrection, by whom it was occupied. In this disastrous contest the Archduke John lost six thousand men, of whom above three thousand were made prisoners, and two pieces of cannon. The loss of the French was not more than half that amount ; for, though those who fell were nearly as numerous, they lost few prisoners.¹

The battle of Raab, notwithstanding its calamitous result, was in the highest degree honourable to the troops of the Hungarian insurrection, who composed so large a portion of the Imperial army, and who, though brought into fire for the first time, for hours disputed the palm of victory with veteran soldiers. It was attended, however, by very disastrous consequences. Not only was the moral impression of the battle of Aspern sensibly weakened by the loss of the very next serious engagement which took

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1809.
13.
Defeat and
losses of the
Austrians.

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xix.
179, 180.
Jom. iii. 249.
Pel. iv. 102,
103. Stut.
262, 264.

14.
Siege and
capture of
Raab.

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1809.

June 24.

¹ 21st Bull.
Monit. June
30, 1809.
Jom. iii. 251.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
179, 180.
Pel. iv. 103,
104, 142.

place between the two powers, but the force of the Hungarian insurrection was irrecoverably broken by the ill success of its first essay in arms, and the loss of the fortress and intrenched camp of Raab, which shortly after took place. The latter was evacuated immediately after the battle; the former was shortly after besieged by Lauriston, with heavy cannon drawn from the arsenal of Vienna, and taken, with its garrison of two thousand men, chiefly militia. The possession of this fortress, though armed only with eighteen guns, was a material advantage to the French, not only as depriving the enemy of a fortified post on the right bank of the Danube, from which they would probably have derived important advantages in the progress of the campaign, but as destroying the shelter of the intrenched camp where the Hungarian insurrection might have been further trained in the military art, and brought to render the most valuable service as light troops to the regular forces. At the same time, it gave a solid *point d'appui* to the right flank of Napoleon, and put it in his power to call up almost the whole force of Eugene to his own standard, in the decisive action which was approaching on the Marchfeld.¹

15.
Operations
of Marmont
and Macdonald
in Illyria and
Carinthia.

April 23.

While these important events were securing the right wing of the French army in the Hungarian plains, Marmont and Macdonald, after severally overcoming every obstacle, were rapidly approaching with the reserves from the Dalmatian shores and the mountains of Styria. The first of these generals, who had remained in command of the Illyrian provinces ever since the treaty of Tilsit, found himself, in the early part of the campaign, entirely isolated from the French armies by the advance of the Archduke John through Carniola and Styria to the banks of the Adige. In the end of April, the Austrian general Stoickewich had been detached by that prince with eight thousand men to aid the insurrectionary movements which were preparing in the mountains of

Dalmatia against the French authorities; and some skirmishes had taken place between the advanced posts of the opposite parties, in which the Imperialists had the advantage. They had already descended from the hills, and made themselves masters of a considerable extent of sea-coast, including the fort of Lossin Picolo, which brought them into contact with the English cruisers in the Adriatic, when the intelligence of the retreat of the Archduke from Italy, and the near approach of Macdonald by Laybach towards their line of communication with Austria, rendered it necessary to commence a retreat. Marmont lost no time in following the retiring corps of the enemy, and a severe action took place on the 23d, on the banks of the Lika, without any decisive advantage to either party. In obedience to the orders they had received, the Imperialists continued their retreat; and Marmont, being now summoned up with his whole corps to the support of the Grand Army, pressed on in pursuit. A few days after, he arrived at Fiume, which was entered without opposition, and remained there two days to rest his troops after the laborious mountain marches they had undergone. On the 3d June he reached Laybach, which was evacuated on his approach; while the corps of Giulay and Chastellar, which had abandoned the Tyrol by orders from the Archduke John, in order to the concentration of the forces of the monarchy in its vitals, were painfully, and by cross roads, traversing the mountains in his front, in their march towards Gratz and the Hungarian plains.¹

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April 26, 27.

May 9.

May 14.

May 23.

May 28.

¹ Pel. iv.
108, 117.
Jom.iii.253,
254. Barth.
264, 267.

These retiring generals had a most perilous task to perform in their march eastward through Styria and Carniola, where Marmont, established at Laybach, was ready to fall perpendicularly on their flank; and Macdonald, who was hastening up from Villach in Carinthia, on the traces of Eugene, threatened their rear. It appeared almost impossible that they could escape so many dangers: but such was the skill of the Imperial

16.
Extraordi-
nary difficul-
ties which
Chastellar
encounter-
ed.

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1809.

June 1.

¹ Pel. iv.
117, 119.
Jom. iii. 254.
Erz. Johan.
Feld. 232,
237. Vict.
et Cong.
xix. 183.

17.
Operations
of Giulay in
Carniola
and Styria.
May 3.

commanders, and the activity of their troops, that they not only extricated themselves without any serious loss from this hazardous situation, but very nearly inflicted an important blow upon their opponents. Chastellar, obliged to evacuate the Tyrol, had descended the valley of the Drave, and assembled his troops at Villach; from thence he made a demonstration against Klagenfurth, where the Italian general Rusca had collected a few battalions; and after some sharp fighting he reached the right bank of the Drave, and succeeded, by throwing that river between him and his pursuers, in extricating himself from the dangers that threatened him. He would have been utterly destroyed if Marmont had been a little more expeditious in his movements; for had that general arrived two days sooner at Nakles, where the two roads from Klagenfurth and Villach unite, he would have occupied the only route by which the enemy could have reached the Drave; and if Chastellar had thrown himself across the mountains into the defiles of the Muhr, he would have fallen into the hands of Macdonald, who was descending the rocky banks of that romantic stream. But everything in war depends upon precision of calculation and rapidity of movement, and the most active and vigilant generals are frequently ignorant of what is passing on the enemy's part, within a few leagues of their headquarters.¹

Giulay, whose corps formed part of the army of the Archduke John, had been detached by that prince into Croatia, of which he was the Ban, to raise the landwehr of that warlike province and of Carniola, and await ulterior orders. Subsequently, the disasters and continued retreat of the Italian army rendered it necessary for the Archduke to recall him to his standards; and Giulay had turned to such good account the few weeks which he had spent in his province, that he was prepared now to take the field at the head of twenty thousand men, of whom eight thousand were regulars. With this imposing force he

broke up in the beginning of June from Raun and Agram on the Save, and began his march northward for Marburg, with the design of joining the Archduke, whom he conceived to be still at Gratz in Styria. He moved, however, so slowly, that he did not reach Marburg till the 15th, the day after the battle of Raab, though the distance was only eighteen leagues, being not five miles a-day. Had he exerted himself as his strength permitted and the crisis required, he might have been on the 14th in direct communication with that prince, and in time to share in the battle. This only required him to march ten or twelve miles a-day, no great undertaking for veteran troops and hardy mountaineers; and had he done so, the battle of Raab would either not have been fought or have been converted into a victory, and the Archduke John, with sixty thousand undiscouraged troops, would have appeared with decisive effect on the field of Wagram. The first care of a general should be to accustom his soldiers to march: Napoleon's grenadiers were perfectly right when they said it was by their legs, more than their arms, that he gained his victories.¹

A brilliant enterprise, however, though of a subordinate character, awaited the Austrian general. General Broussier, with a French brigade, had been left to besiege the fort of Schlossberg, at Gratz, after Macdonald had left that town, and proceeded onward in the steps of the Viceroy towards the Grand Army; and Giulay, having learned, as he came up from the southward, the exposed situation of the besiegers, conceived the design of surrounding and making them prisoners. On the 24th, his advanced posts were at the gates of Gratz; and Broussier, justly apprehensive of being cut off, had, two days before, raised the siege of the castle, and retired to the bridge of Weinzittel, over the Muhr, at the entrance of the valley of Bruck. Having received intelligence, however, in the course of the same day, of the real position of the main body of the enemy's forces, which he conceived to be

CHAP.
LIX.

1809.

June 3.

June 15.

¹ Vict. et
Cong. xix.
184. Pel.
iv. 120, 121.
Erz. Johan.
Feld. 238,
240.

18.
Attack on
Broussier,
near Gratz.
June 24.

June 22.

- CHAP. LIX.
 1809.
 June 23. unable to take any part in the action which was approaching, he sent back four battalions under Colonel Gambier, who resumed his former position around the fort, and renewed the bombardment. In this situation the besiegers were attacked by a greatly superior force under Giulay, and being entirely separated from the remainder of the troops under Broussier, their destruction appeared inevitable. The heroism of Colonels Gambier and Neagle, however, joined to the intrepidity of their troops, extricated them from their dangerous situation: the Croatian landwehr were no match in close fight for the French veterans; a decisive charge with the bayonet checked the Imperialists in the first onset; when their cartridges were exhausted, the French threw themselves into a churchyard, which they defended with invincible resolution, and though weakened by the loss of half their numbers, they were still gloriously combating round their eagles, when Broussier with his remaining four battalions arrived, and cut his way through to his heroic followers. In this memorable action the French lost eight, the Austrians twelve hundred men; and Napoleon, in just testimony of his sense of the conduct of the troops engaged, made Colonel Gambier a count of the empire, and gave to his regiment, the 84th, the motto, "*Un contre Dix.*" Marmont, who had been summoned by Broussier to his assistance, arrived on the evening of the 26th before the walls of Gratz, and immediately made preparations, in concert with Gambier, for a general assault on the town and suburbs on the following day; but the Imperialists, in no condition to withstand so formidable an attack, withdrew in the night, and the junction of the French generals was effected next day without opposition. They left merely a few battalions to continue the siege of the castle, and, pressing on with great rapidity, arrived in the island of Lobau on the 3d July, where the whole forces of Napoleon were now assembled for the decisive battle which was approaching.¹
- June 25.
 June 26.
 June 27.
 July 3.
¹ 24th Bull.
 Monit. July
 10, 1809.
 Vict. et
 Cong. xix.
 185, 195.
 Jom.iii.255,
 256. Erz.
 Johan. Feld.
 284, 302.
 Pel. iv. 122,
 129.

The French Emperor, at the same time, had called Prince Eugene and the Italian army to his standards. On the 2d July he received orders to repair without delay to the general rendezvous in the island of Lobau, whither Napoleon had transferred his headquarters from the palace of Schönbrunn three days before. Skilfully masking his design by a large body of heavy cavalry pushed forward to the advanced posts before Komorn, he withdrew his artillery, stores, and infantry, unperceived by the enemy, and late on the evening of the 4th reached the island of Lobau, where his arrival swelled the host to a hundred and eighty thousand men, with seven hundred pieces of cannon; while, by an unhappy fatality, the Archduke John, though entirely on the left bank of the Danube, still remained in presence of a deserted camp in the plains of Hungary. This general concentration of the French troops in front of Essling was attended with one secondary but important effect, in restoring the southern provinces of the empire to the dominion of Austria, and opening up a direct communication with the English cruisers in the Adriatic. In proportion as Croatia and Carniola were evacuated by the advance of Marmont to the Danube, those two important provinces were regained by Giulay's troops: several French detachments and depots fell into the hands of the Imperialists; Laibach, with some hundred prisoners, was taken; and the communication with the coast having been restored, a subsidy from England was disembarked in Dalmatia, and, after traversing the mountains, arrived in safety in Hungary, to the amount of three hundred and twenty thousand pounds.¹

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19.

Junction of
Eugene to
the Grand
Army, and
reoccupa-
tion of Croa-
tia by the
Austrians.
July 5.

¹ Pel. iv.
128, 131.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
194, 197.
Stat. 326,
330.

Before the decisive struggle on the Danube commenced, affairs had taken a more propitious turn for the French arms on the shores of the Vistula. The bold stroke of Poniatowsky in throwing himself into the eastern parts of Poland and menacing Galicia, after Warsaw was taken, joined to the tardy but at length serious approach of the

- CHAP. Russian forces, arrested the Archduke Ferdinand in his
LIX. victorious career on the southern Vistula. His advanced
guard had already reached Thorn, fifty leagues below the
capital, when the intelligence of the march of Poniatowsky in the direction of Cracow, joined to the alarming progress of the insurrection excited by Dombrowsky in the neighbourhood of Posen, the indisposition of Prussia to take any decisive part, and the approach of Prince Gallitzin, with thirty thousand Russians, towards Lemberg and the Galician frontiers, warned him of the necessity of retreat. Advancing to Lemberg, Poniatowsky had spread his light troops over the whole of Austrian Poland, exciting everywhere the national enthusiasm, and producing an alarming fermentation by the sight of the much-loved uniforms. His advanced posts had even surmounted the Carpathian range, and carried consternation to within a few leagues of the Hungarian frontier ; while another of his divisions, under Sokolniki, had boldly crossed the Vistula, and surprised fifteen hundred Austrians (besides eighteen pieces of cannon) at Sandomir, who were all either slain or made prisoners. At the same time General Pelletier, with a third detachment, by a brilliant *coup-de-main*, made himself master by escalade of Zamosc, though defended by a lofty rampart and deep ditch, and captured two thousand men and an arsenal containing fifty pieces of cannon.¹
1809. Operations in Poland, and successes of the Polish detachments at Sandomir and Zamosc.
- Atlas, Plate 39.
- May 24.
- May 19.
- May 20.
¹ Vict. et Conq. xix. 128, 199.
Pel. iv. 55, 58. Jom. iii. 238.
21. Recapture of Warsaw by the Poles, and retreat of the Archduke Ferdinand.
- May 24.
- This succession of disasters, and still more, perhaps, the approach of the Russians under Prince Gallitzin to the frontiers of Galicia, determined the Archduke Ferdinand to retreat. His generals had, by a sudden attack, made themselves masters of the *tête-de-pont* at Thorn, on the right bank of the Vistula ; but the garrison, retiring to the body of the place on the left, burned a part of the bridge, and the Imperialists had neither the means of crossing that ample stream, nor of commencing a siege in form of that fortress. This was the extreme point of their advance. On the following day they commenced their

retreat, severely harassed by the light troops which the indefatigable Dombrowsky had raised in the duchy of Posen. The Austrian garrison being withdrawn from Warsaw on the 30th May, the Polish militia, under Zayonscheck, recovered possession of that capital ; and Ferdinand slowly retired towards the Austrian frontier. The indecision and procrastination of Russia, it was hoped, were now at an end ; and Alexander professed himself prepared in good earnest to adhere to his engagements entered into at Tilsit and Erfurth. General Schauroth commanded the advanced division of the Austrians ; and Ferdinand, with reason, conceived that he might, in his retreat, avenge the check received at Sandomir, by making prisoners the Polish garrison in that town. Detaching Schauroth, therefore, as a corps of observation towards Lemberg, he himself, with his main body and heavy artillery, suddenly appeared before it ; and having brought up his guns, burst open the gates, and his grenadiers penetrated into the streets. The Poles, however, under Sokolniki, rallied with admirable courage, and for eight hours kept up an obstinate resistance from street to street, and from house to house ; until the Austrians, wearied, and sensible the place could not long hold out, retired, with the loss of eight hundred killed and wounded, and four hundred prisoners. Finding his ammunition exhausted, however, Sokolniki, two days afterwards, entered into a treaty with the Austrian general, in virtue of which he evacuated the place, and retired to the Polish army.¹

CHAP.
LIX.1809.
May 30.

June 2.

June 15.

June 17.
¹ Pel. iv.
Jom.iii.239.
Vict. et
Conq. xxx.
130, 132.

Alarmed at the capture of a place of such importance, Poniatowsky now made the most vigorous remonstrances to Prince Gallitzin, and urged the immediate adoption of concerted measures. But it still appeared that the cabinet of St Petersburg was playing a double part. Though the Russian general was now so near as materially to influence the fate of the campaign, he could not be prevailed on to take an active part, and exhibited an order of the Emperor Alexander which forbade him to

22.
Concluding
operations
of the cam-
paign in
Poland.

CHAP.
LIX.

1809.

June 19.
1 Jom. iv.
239, 240.
Monit. June
29, 30, and
July 8, 1809.
Pel. iv. 74,
75.

23.
Cracow is
occupied by
the Poles.
July 6.

July 9.

cross the Vistula. He consented, however, to occupy the country on the right bank of that river, so as to leave the Poles at liberty to prosecute their operations on the left. Relieved to a certain degree by their presence in that quarter, Poniatowsky suddenly changed his line of operations, and descended the Vistula on the right, in order to connect himself with Zayonscheck and Dombrowsky. Meanwhile, the Archduke Ferdinand received orders to direct his steps a second time towards the grand-duchy of Warsaw, in order to support the efforts which the cabinet of Vienna at that period were making to rouse Prussia to join the alliance. Having dismantled Sandomir, accordingly, he concentrated his forces; and, while Poniatowsky moved down the right bank of the Vistula, he descended the left, and, with twenty-five thousand men, advanced to Petrikau, on the Pilica.¹

This offensive movement, however, was not long persevered in; the Archduke Ferdinand had prepared an intrenched camp near the sources of that river, at a point where two roads to Austria branch off, the one by Cracow, the other by Olkusz, and was slowly advancing to occupy it, when hostilities were interrupted by the intelligence of the armistice of Znaym. Meanwhile the Russians advanced to Cracow, and their vanguard had already occupied its gates; when Poniatowsky, jealous of the acquisition of the second city of old Poland by its most inveterate enemy, summoned all his forces to his standards, and hastened, with twenty-five thousand men, to anticipate Prince Gallitzin in that important conquest. The road was blocked up by Russian troops, who prohibited all further passage; the Poles insisted on their right to advance; the old and ill-concealed animosity of the two nations was ready to break out, and the advanced posts were already coming to blows, when Prince Gallitzin deemed it prudent to yield, and permit the occupation of the city by the Polish troops. There they remained during the whole of the armistice; but the military ardour

of the Poles was strongly excited by this brilliant termination of the campaign ; hopes long smothered began to revive of the possibility of a national restoration ; recruits flocked in from all quarters to the national standards, and, before the peace of Vienna, Poniatowsky had forty-eight thousand men on his muster-rolls, besides the troops who were combating under the standards of Napoleon in the Spanish peninsula.^{1*}

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1809.

¹ Pel. iv. 70,
75. Jom. iv.
239, 240.
21st Bull.
Monit. June
29, 30, and
July 8.

These successes, however, had only a remote and considerable influence on the fate of the campaign ; the decisive blows were to be dealt out from the island of Lobau. There, in the first week of July, a prodigious armament was collected ; and the French officers, however much inured to military prodigies, were never weary of admiring the immense array which the activity and foresight of the Emperor had collected for the final struggle. On the 2d July he mounted on horseback at Schönbrunn, and rode to Lobau, where headquarters were thenceforward established : and at two o'clock on the afternoon of that day the reinforcements began to arrive there from all quarters. Never, in modern times, probably never in the history of the world, was such precision witnessed in the movements of corps converging together from such distant quarters. Hardly had Bernadotte arrived with the Saxons from the banks of the Elbe, when Vandamme appeared with the Würtembergers and troops of the Confederation from Suabia and the Rhenish provinces ; Wrede with

24.
Extraordi-
nary con-
centration
of the
French
forces in
the island
of Lobau.

July 2.

* Poniatowsky's complaints of the tardiness of the Russians throughout this campaign were, as might easily have been anticipated, both frequent and acrimonious. On the 27th June he thus wrote to the Emperor Napoleon :—" Notwithstanding the positive promise of Prince Gallitzin to move two of his divisions across the San on the 21st instant, he did nothing of the kind. Under pretence of failure of provisions, that measure was not carried into effect till two days after, and then with the same tardiness which has characterised all the operations of the campaign. These delays have given the Austrian corps, which had been thrown forward on the right bank of the Vistula, the means of effecting its retreat without any molestation. The certain intelligence which, subsequent to that period, they had received, that Prince Gallitzin would not pass the Vistula, has encouraged the Archduke Ferdinand to move the greater part of his forces, or about twenty-five thousand men, to the Pilica,

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1809.

July 4.

the Bavarians from the banks of the Lech; Macdonald and Broussier next arrived over the Alpine ridges from Carinthia and Carniola. No sooner had they taken the places assigned them, than Marmont's leading columns began to appear from the Dalmatian shores; and when they had found room in the crowded isle, the veterans of Eugene came up from the Hungarian plains in the neighbourhood of Presburg. By the evening of the 4th the whole were assembled: horse, foot, cannon, and ammunition waggons had traversed in safety the bridges which connected the island with the southern shore; and a hundred and fifty thousand infantry and thirty thousand cavalry, with seven hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, were collected in a space not exceeding two miles and a half in length, by one and three quarters in breadth.* This extraordinary concentration of force had inspired the troops with more than their wonted ardour: none doubted of the issue when the military strength of half of Europe was there accumulated at a single point under the guidance of Napoleon: the lines literally touched each other, and each regiment acquired fresh confidence from the animating story of its neighbour's achievements. Never since the Grand Army broke up in 1805 from the shores of the Channel had it been so collected together. Many there met who had not shaken hands since they parted on the heights of Boulogne;¹ and many hearts then glowed with the joy of newly-awakened friendship,

¹ Pel. iv.
153, 154.
Sav. iv. 100,
102. Jom.
iii. 258, 259.

and thus menace the frontiers of the grand-duchy of Warsaw. This has obliged me to move upon Pulawy. The arrival of the Russian army in Galicia having afforded them a pretext for spreading themselves over the province, has contributed materially to retard the formation of the new levies; for the Russian generals establish wherever they go Austrian authorities, who do all they can to torment the inhabitants, and to stifle every feeling which may eventually menace the interests of their sovereign."—SAVARY, iv. 95. In another part he stated:—"The concert of the Russians with Austria is so clearly demonstrated, that, to speak plainly, it was the Polish troops whom they both regarded as enemies. It was the more difficult to prevent the effects of that intelligence, that the chiefs of the two armies acted entirely in concert, to give occasions for it to arise."—PELET, iv. 73.

* The French military historians give one hundred and fifty thousand men

which were destined in a few hours to be for ever severed from each other in this world.

The utmost pains had been taken by the French Emperor, during the interval of hostilities at Vienna, to restore the spirit and enthusiasm of the soldiers, which had been severely weakened by the result of the battle of Aspern. Gratuities to a large extent had been awarded to the soldiers' widows, under circumstances the most likely to affect the imagination of the receivers and all who witnessed it. Not only did the Emperor himself frequently visit the hospitals, but he made his aides-de-camp regularly inspect them; at stated intervals, and after the recovery of the greater part was in some degree effected, he distributed with great pomp a considerable gratuity to all the soldiers who had suffered. Every private received sixty francs, (£2, 10s.,) and every officer in proportion to his rank, from one hundred and fifty to fifteen hundred francs, (from £6 to £60.) For several days the Emperor and his staff were exclusively engaged in this humane duty; and it was accompanied by circumstances that increased the effect which the gratuity, already so considerable, produced upon the minds of the men. The splendid *cortège* proceeded to the distribution in full uniform, and traversed the long galleries of the hospitals, preceded by the records of the regiments, in which the deeds of each were minutely entered, and followed by servants in full livery, carrying large baskets, in which the money was placed. Twelve or twenty crown-pieces were deposited by the bedside of each man, taken, not from the regimental funds, but from the privy

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1809.

25.

Efforts of
Napoleon to
restore the
spirit of his
soldiers.

and four hundred pieces of cannon for the total strength of the Grand Army before the battle of Wagram: but we have the authority of Savary (iv. 100, c. 12) for the assertion, that they amounted to the number stated in the text; and Napoleon said, on the evening of the 4th July, to the Austrian general sent with a flag of truce—"Sir, I have no doubt why you have been sent here. So much the worse for your general if he does not know that to-morrow I shall pass the Danube with the whole force you see here: there are one hundred and eighty thousand men; the days are long: woe to the vanquished!"—SAVARY, iv. 101. See also KAUSLER, *Atlas der Schlachten*, 379.

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1809.

¹ Sav. iv.
88, 89.

26.

Force and
disposition
of the Aus-
trian army.

purse of the Emperor. Tears rolled down the cheeks of the mutilated veterans, as they witnessed the touching scene ; many wept with joy who were destined to sink under their wounds before an opportunity of expending their little treasure could arrive.¹

The Austrian army, though not equally reinforced, had received considerable accessions of strength since the battle of Aspern, and was animated by a still more profound feeling. The twenty-five thousand brave men who had fallen, or been disabled in that glorious strife, were in part recovered, or had been compensated by the corps of Kollowrath, which had come up from the vicinity of Lintz ; twenty thousand more had been drawn from the depots in the interior ; and fifty thousand landwehr were incorporated with the regular soldiers, and, from their being constantly exercised with veteran troops, had acquired a considerable degree of efficiency. Thus, above a hundred and forty thousand men were assembled for the decisive struggle ; besides those under the Archduke John, who, with eighteen thousand regulars and an equal number of the Hungarian insurrection, was at Presburg, ten leagues from the field of battle. If they could all have been brought to bear upon the enemy, their numbers would have been as great as the gigantic host of Napoleon. But they were far from being equally concentrated : and the Archduke Charles was by no means prepared for the extraordinary rapidity and energy which were about to be infused into the enemy's movements. On the evening of the 4th, when the whole array of the French Emperor was accumulated in Lobau, and the ranks of so many armies stood almost in close column on its meadows, the generalissimo had little more than half his force ready for immediate operations.²

² Kausler,
381. Jom.
iii. 258. Pel.
iv. 155, 160.

The Prince of Reuss was watching the banks of the Danube from Stockerau to Vienna, with his headquarters at Stammersdorf ; Kollowarth was at Hagenbrunn, on

the north-western slope of the Bisamberg ; the reserve of grenadiers was at Gerasdorf ; Klenau at Essling, and in the intrenchments opposite to the bridge of Aspern ; while Nordmann, with the advanced guard, lay at Enzersdorf, and guarded the course of the Danube as far as Presburg. Bellegarde, Hohenzollern, and Rosenberg, were at WAGRAM, or posted along the course of the Russbach ; while the reserve cavalry was at Breitenlee, Aderklaa, and the villages in that neighbourhood. Thus, the Archduke's army was arrayed in two lines, the first stretching twenty leagues along the course of the Danube : the second, two leagues in the rear, posted on the plateau of Wagram and the heights of the Russbach. A courier was despatched on the evening of the 4th, to summon up the Archduke John to the decisive point : but the distance was so great that he could not be expected to arrive at the scene of action till late on the following evening. Seven hundred pieces of cannon attended the army : but the cavalry had never recovered the fatal ravages of the preceding battles, and the equipment of the artillery was far from being in the perfect state in which it was at the commencement of the campaign, or so complete as that of the French had become from the resources of the arsenal of Vienna. Never was more clearly demonstrated the vital importance of central fortifications in war : many of the enthusiastic recruits of Austria were now deficient in the most necessary equipments, while the French troops found all their losses amply supplied from the stores of the capital. Had Vienna still held out, or its magnificent arsenal been secure from attack, the fate of the campaign would probably have been different, and Wagram had been Leipsic. But the whole warlike multitude were animated by a heroic spirit ; every one felt that the crisis of the monarchy was at hand, and the glorious result of the battle of Aspern had inspired them all with the most sanguine hopes as to the ultimate issue of the struggle.¹

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27.
Positions of
the Austrian
corps.Atlas,
Plate 58.

¹ Kausler, Schlachten von Neues Zeit, 381. Jom.iii.258, 259. Pel.iv. 155, 157, 162. Stut. 348,350. M. de Grune's Correspond. Official.

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1809.

28.

False pre-
parations for
a passage in
front of
Aspern.

July 2.

July 3.

The better to conceal his real designs, Napoleon had some days before made preparations as if for forcing a passage over the great bridge, and through the intrenchments of Aspern and Essling. On the 2d July, five hundred voltigeurs were embarked and transported across to the small island which lay in the middle of the northern branch of the Danube between these two villages; the Imperialists were dispossessed, and the bridge was commenced. The Archduke, upon the first alarm, hastened to the spot, and a violent fire was opened by the Austrian batteries on the French engineers engaged in its construction: above two hundred cannon-balls fell among the boats without arresting these brave men. The bridge was soon completed from Lobau as far as the island: nothing but a fordable branch, thirty yards broad, now separated the French from the northern bank. Such was the importance which Napoleon attached to this demonstration, that on the following morning he came himself to the spot, and in his anxiety to reconnoitre the opposite coast, ascended to the summit of the parapet, and remained there for some minutes, within pistol-shot of the Croatian outposts on the northern bank.* He ordered a lunette to be constructed on the western part of this little island, capable of affording protection to a bridge of rafts, which was kept in readiness to be thrown over the last shallow branch of the river, under cover of the parapet. Thus the French were masters of two bridges leading from the salient angle of the island of Lobau into the field of Aspern;¹ and the Imperialists were so impressed with the idea that the passage was to be attempted at the same point as the former one, that, by daybreak on the morning of the 4th, their massy columns were in motion

¹ Pel. iv.
149, 163.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
201. Jom.
iii. 260, 261.

* Massena accompanied the Emperor on this occasion, and as he withdrew from the front was grievously bruised by a fall of his horse. The army were fearful that they would be deprived of his powerful aid on the field of battle: but he appeared there on the following day in an open calèche. Napoleon exclaimed, when he saw him striving against pain and exposed to the fire, "Who would fear death when he sees how the brave are prepared to die?"—PELET, iv. 152, *note*.

from the plateau of Wagram ; and in two hours after, the works, along their whole extent, were gleaming with helmets and bayonets.

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1809.

Napoleon, however, had no intention of forcing the passage at this point ; and these preparations, so serious in appearance, were but a stratagem to conceal the real point of attack from the enemy. Nothing of importance was attempted during the remainder of the 4th ; but, towards evening, the troops being all collected, burning with ardour, and the preparations completed, Oudinot commenced the embarkation at Enzersdorf. The Emperor himself took his station on horseback on the margin of the branch where the passage was to be attempted, and with indefatigable energy urged on the movements. With such vigour were they conducted, that in a quarter of an hour, the bridge destined for the passage of that corps was thrown across : all hands were immediately turned to the three bridges which had been secretly prepared in the covered channel of the Danube ; and the first, composed of a single timber frame, was brought out of its place of concealment, thrown across, and made fast to the opposite shore, in the short space of ten minutes. The transporting and fastening of the other two required a little more time ; but with such vigour were the operations conducted, under the immediate inspection of the Emperor, who never ceased an instant during the whole night to direct and animate the men, that by three o'clock in the following morning six bridges were completed, and the troops of all arms were in full march across them.¹

29.
Extraordi-
nary passage
of the Dan-
ube by Na-
poleon.
July 4.

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xix.
201, 202.
Stut. 302,
305. Pel.
167, 169.

A violent fire was during the whole time kept up from a hundred and nine pieces of heavy cannon, disposed along each side of the salient angle formed by the northern extremity of the island of Lobau, on the Austrian lines, which fell with unprecedented fury on the village of Enzersdorf, and induced the enemy to open from all their batteries on the bridge of Aspern, in the idea that

30.
Dreadful
tempest and
scene during
the passage.

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1809.

it was there the passage was going forward. Both shores soon formed a line of flame; the heavens were illuminated by the ceaseless flight of bombs: seldom fewer than twelve of these flaming projectiles were seen at once traversing the air in opposite directions. Vehement, however, as was the contest of men, it was surpassed by the elemental strife on that awful night. A tempest arose soon after it was dark: the wind blew with terrific violence; torrents of rain fell without intermission; the thunder rolled above the loudest roar of the artillery; and the frequent glare of the lightning outshone even the flames of Enzersdorf, which, set on fire by the French bombardment, burned with inextinguishable fury from being fanned by the gales of the tempest. During this terrible scene, however, the cool judgment of Napoleon never for an instant lost sight of the main object in view. For several hours he walked incessantly, amidst mud and water, from one bridge to the other; the passage of the troops was pressed on with indefatigable activity; and numerous boats which, without intermission, plied to and fro, facilitated the transportation of the foot-soldiers. Such was the unprecedented vigour of all concerned in the operation, that, by six o'clock in the following morning, not only were all the bridges firmly established, but a hundred and fifty thousand infantry, thirty thousand cavalry, and six hundred pieces of cannon, were grouped in dense array on the northern shore, between Enzersdorf and the margin of the Danube.¹

¹ Sav. iv.
102, 103.
Pel. iv. 167,
173. Vict.
et Conq.
xix. 202,
203. Stut.
302, 309.
Larry, iii.
347.

31.

Vast advantages gained by this manoeuvre to the French.

Great was the surprise of the Imperialists, at daybreak on the 5th, to see not a man passed over by the bridge opposite to Aspern, but the plain farther down, opposite to Enzersdorf, covered with an enormous dark mass of troops, drawn up in close column, in the finest array, in such numbers as almost to defy calculation. The tempest had ceased: the mists rolled away as day approached; the sky was serene, and the sun of Austerlitz shone forth in unclouded brilliancy. His rays revealed a match-

less spectacle. The shores of the Danube were resplendent with arms; cuirasses, helmets, and bayonets, glittered on every side: the bridges, the isle of Lobau, the northern shore, were covered with a countless array of men, drawn up in admirable order, or pressing on in ceaseless march; while long files of artillery presented an apparently irresistible force to the enemy. Then appeared, in the clearest manner, the vast advantage which the French Emperor had gained by the manœuvre of the preceding night. The river was passed, the communications with the opposite shore secured, the left flank of the Austrian position turned, all the intrenchments intended to bar the passage taken in reverse, the labour of six weeks rendered useless, the enemy cut off from his communication with Hungary and the remaining resources of the monarchy, and thrown back, with his face to the east, towards the Bohemian mountains. The activity and genius of Napoleon had in a few hours defeated all the long-meditated designs of the Austrian generals. The plateau of Wagram, chosen, with provident foresight, as the most advantageous central position from whence to fall upon the leading corps which had effected the passage, had lost much of its peculiar value by the river having been crossed in a single night by the whole army; and the rival hosts were reduced to combat on equal terms in the vast plain of the Marchfeld, under circumstances which promised but a doubtful chance of success to the Imperial forces.* The French soldiers, rapid beyond any others in Europe at apprehending the

* The Austrian generals had, after long consideration, selected the plateau of Wagram as the most favourable ground whereon to throw their last stake for the independence of the monarchy. In the Imperial cabinet the French found, after the battle, a valuable military work on the environs of Vienna, in which the second camp to be taken, in the event of the river being crossed, was precisely that which the Archduke occupied at Wagram. The chances of both parties were ably calculated; but the engineer had never discovered the vast military importance of the island of Lobau, nor contemplated the possibility of the enemy throwing six bridges from it to the opposite side, and crossing one hundred and eighty thousand men over in a single night.—See SAVARY, iv. 105.

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LIX.

1809.

¹ Pel. iv.
172, 175.
Sav. iv. 103,
104. Jom.
iii. 260, 261.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
202, 203.

chances and dangers of their situation, at once appreciated the advantage they had gained ; and casting a look of admiration at the bridges, the chaussées, the intrenchments, by which the dangers of the passage had been surmounted, turned in joyous confidence towards the enemy : while their chief had already commenced the formation of gigantic fieldworks to protect the army upon the northern shore.¹

32.

Retreat of
the Aus-
trians to
the position
of Wagram.
July 5.

Having lost, through the unparalleled activity of their opponents, the favourable opportunity of attacking the French army in the act of passing the bridges, nothing remained to the Austrians but to retire to the position in the rear of Aspern and Essling, which had been selected, after mature deliberation by the Imperial generals, as the most favourable ground whereon to throw the last die for the independence of the monarchy. All their outposts accordingly were called in ; the whole intrenchments, constructed at so vast a cost of labour in front of the bridge of Aspern, were abandoned ; and the army retired to its last and chosen field, on the plateau of WAGRAM. The strength of this position justified the choice of the Archduke, and did credit to the prophetic anticipations of the Aulic Council. It consists of an elevated plain, in the form of a vast parallelogram, which rises at the distance of four miles from the Danube, at the northern extremity of the plain of the Marchfeld. This plateau is bounded along its southern front by the stream of the Russbach, which, descending at first through the high grounds that form the northern boundary of the valley, perpendicularly to the Danube, from north to south, turns sharp round towards the east at Deutsch Wagram, and flows along the whole front of the position to Neusiedel, at the foot of the heights which form its southern rampart. This stream, though everywhere fordable by infantry, can be traversed by cavalry and artillery only at the bridges in the villages, which were carefully guarded.² From Neusiedel, the plateau turns sharp to the northward, and

² Personal
observation.
Pel. iv. 168.
Kausler, 54.

has its eastern face clearly defined by a steep ridge descending to the low grounds in that direction for several miles to the north.

Thus this plateau formed a great square redoubt, rising to the north of the plain, with a wet ditch running along its front, and strengthened by the villages of Wagram and Neusiedel at each angle. The village of Baumersdorf, situated half a mile to the south of the Russbach, about the centre of the southern front, formed an outwork beyond the wet ditch. Though this important plateau, however, constituted the strength, it was by no means the whole of the Austrian position. Their lines extended also to the westward far beyond Deutsch Wagram, along a ridge of heights, arranged as it were by nature for the defensive position of a vast army, as far as Stammersdorf and the eastern slope of the fir-clad Bisamberg; forming altogether an elevated position, about fifteen miles in length, on a series of heights facing and slightly curved towards the south. From their feet to the Danube, distant about nine miles, stretched out the vast and level plain of the Marchfeld. In the concave space included in this curve, at the foot of the heights, about their centre, is the village of Gerasdorf; and a few miles farther, in the level surface of the Marchfeld, the villages of Adersklau and Süssenbrunn, which thus lay about midway between the two armies, and became important points of attack, and the theatre of desperate conflicts in the battle which followed.¹

The Archduke, in consequence of the dispersed state of his army, rendered unavoidable by the uncertainty which prevailed as to the place where the passage would be attempted, had only the grenadiers and corps of Rosenberg, Bellegarde, and Hohenzollern, sixty thousand strong, on the plateau of Wagram and in the village of the same name, when the enemy appeared before him. Klenau and Kollowrath were at a distance on the Bisamberg with the right wing; and the left, under the Archduke John,

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1809.

33.
Its description, and great strength.

¹ Personal observation. Pel. iv. 168, 169, 184. Kausler, 54. Jom. iii. 264.

34.
Advance of the French over the Marchfeld. July 5.

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was twenty-five miles off, stretching towards Presburg. No serious resistance, in consequence, was made to the advance of the French over the plain — the Austrian outposts retiring as the French approached towards their central position on the hills. Napoleon's army, after the passage was effected, was drawn up between Enzersdorf and the Danube, perpendicular to the river, with its left touching the water: the concentration of the troops was such, that it resembled an immense close column, nearly two hundred thousand strong. Presently, however, the order to march was given, and the different corps advanced in a semicircular direction, like the folds of a fan, to the north, east, and west, towards Enzersdorf, Essling, Breitenlee, and Raschdorf. Massena was on the left towards Essling and Aspern; Bernadotte, with the Saxons, towards Aderklaa; Eugene and Oudinot between Wagram and Baumersdorf; Davoust and Grouchy on the right, in the direction of Glinzendorf; while the Imperial Guards, Marmont's corps, Wrede with the Bavarians, and the heavy cavalry, were in reserve under the Emperor in person. Partial combats took place as the Imperialists fell back before this enormous force, both at Enzersdorf and Raschdorf; but no serious resistance was attempted, and the two corps of the Austrians which were in advance in the intrenchments on the banks of the Danube, retired leisurely on the road to Gerasdorf and Neusiedel. The vast fieldworks between Aspern and Essling were abandoned; the Imperialists retired to the heights in the rear, on which the main body of their forces was stationed; and the French army, spreading out like rays from a centre, covered as far as the margin of the Russbach the plain of the Marchfeld.¹

¹ *Jom.* iii.
265. *Pel.* iv.
174, 182.
Sav. iv. 104,
105.

35.
Vehement
attack of the
French on
the plateau
of Wagram.

At six o'clock in the afternoon, Napoleon had come up to the plain between Raschdorf and Baumersdorf, in front of the plateau of Wagram; and he then ascertained that the Archduke John had not yet arrived, and could not appear on the field that day. He immediately resolved

to profit by his great superiority of numbers, and commence an attack—for he had a hundred thousand men grouped in his centre, ready for instant operations; while on the plateau beyond the Russbach, between Wagram and Neusiedel, the Austrians had not more than sixty thousand, under Hohenzollern, Bellegarde, and Rosenberg, to oppose them. Powerful batteries were accordingly brought up, which speedily opened a heavy fire upon the Imperialists' position, to which the Archduke's guns, posted along the front of the plateau, replied from higher ground, and with more effect. Oudinot's corps came first into action in the centre. He attacked Baumersdorf at the foot of the plateau, which was defended by General Hardegg; but such was the obstinacy of the resistance, that he was unable either to force the village, carry the bridges, or make his way across the stream in its rear on either side. Eugene was stationed opposite to Wagram. His leading divisions commenced the attack with great spirit, and, fording the Russbach, ascended the heights in gallant style: but, when they arrived at the summit, they were staggered by a murderous discharge of grape from sixty Austrian guns, within half musket-shot, to which the French had nothing but musketry to oppose, as their guns had not been able to get across the stream. Macdonald, Dupas, and Lamarque, who commanded the divisions engaged, kept their ground, and, bringing up their reserves, the action became extremely warm: and at length the Austrian front line was broken, and thrown back in confusion upon their second. It was now the turn of the Archduke and his generals to feel alarmed: the enemy had broken in upon their position in its strongest part, and his irruption, if promptly supported, promised to pierce the centre of their extensive line. Several Aus-¹ Sav. iv. 106. Jom. iii. 266. Pel. iv. 185. Stat. 310, 315.trian regiments soon after broke, and the French divisions, continuing their triumphant advance, took five standards and two thousand prisoners.¹

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1809.

36.

Which after
a desperate
struggle is
at length
repulsed.

In this extremity the Archduke Charles hastened in person to the spot, at the head of the regiments of Zach, Vogelsang, and d' Erlach, whose steadiness had stemmed a similar torrent on the field of Aspern ; and succeeded, by a determined resistance in front, in arresting the advance of the column. At the same time, Hohenzollern, who had repulsed the attack of Oudinot, charged them vigorously on the right flank with a chosen body of hussars ; and Bellegarde poured in destructive volleys from his grenadiers, abreast of whom the French had now arrived, on the left. The struggle was terrible for a few minutes, and in the course of it the Archduke was wounded ; but it terminated in the repulse of the French, which was speedily converted into a rout, as they were driven headlong down the steep, and fled in wild confusion across the stream of the Russbach. The corps under Bernadotte, who were advancing to their support, in the darkness mistook the retreating host for enemies, and fired upon it : they, in their turn, were overthrown by the torrent of fugitives. The contagious panic communicated itself to the Saxon troops, which suffered most severely both from friends and enemies : one of their battalions "disappeared entirely in the confusion, and was never seen again ;" * and the three French divisions, which had so nearly penetrated the Austrian line, disbanded, and flying over the plain beyond Raschdorf, spread an indescribable alarm through the French centre, as far as the tents of the Emperor. In the general confusion the whole prisoners escaped ; the taken standards were regained ; two French eagles were captured ; and, had the Imperialists been aware of the disorder which prevailed, and followed up their success with fresh troops, the consequences might have been fatal to the French army.¹ Ignorant, however, of the prodigious effect produced by this nocturnal irruption, the Austrian generals at eleven o'clock sounded

¹ Pel. iv.
185, 195.
Sav. iv. 106.
Vict et
Conq. xix.
204, 205.
Jom. iii. 266.
25th Bull.
Monit. July
15, 1809.

* The expression in General Dupas's official report.

a recall ; their troops fell back to their original positions at Baumersdorf, Wagram, and the crest of the plateau : while the French army, wearied with the fatigues of that eventful day, lay down to rest in the vast plain around Raschdorf, and was soon buried in sleep.

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1809.

So destitute was the Marchfeld, at that period, both of trees and habitations, that there was hardly a fire in the whole French army, from the extreme right to the left of the line. At midnight it became intensely cold, and it was with great difficulty that a few parcels of straw and pieces of wood could be got to make a fire for the Emperor. He had advanced with his Guard to the front of the first line, during the panic consequent on the rout of the Saxons and Eugene's corps, and his tent for the night was pitched in the middle of the grenadiers and *vieux moustaches*. Though the troops around were buried in sleep, Napoleon sat up during the whole night, conversing with the marshals and generals of division, receiving reports from the different corps, and communicating to his lieutenants the designs which he had formed. His army occupied a great right-angled triangle, of which the base rested on Aspern, Essling, and Enzersdorf ; one front faced Stammersdorf, Süssenbrunn, and the slopes of the Bisamberg ; the other the plateau of Wagram and Neusiedel ; while the apex, pointing directly at the Austrian centre, was in front of Aderklaa. The project of the Emperor was founded on this concentration on his side, and the scattered position of his opponents on the semicircular range of heights, above fifteen miles long, from the Bisamberg to Neusiedel. Refusing and weakening his left, he determined to throw the weight of his attack upon the centre and left of the Austrians ; hoping thereby to break their line in the point where it was weakest, by an enormous mass of assailants, and cut off the Archduke Charles from the army which, he was well aware, would speedily come

37.
Position and
plan of Na-
poleon for
the battle
on the fol-
lowing day.

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1809.

up, under the Archduke John, from the neighbourhood of Presburg. With this view a considerable dislocation of his troops took place during the night; Massena, who lay on the left around Essling and Aspern, was moved at two in the morning by his right towards Aderklaa, in front of the plateau of Wagram, leaving the single division of Boudet to guard Aspern and the bridges. Thus the whole strength of the French army was concentrated in the centre and right: Davoust being on the extreme right; Massena in front of Aderklaa; Marmont, Oudinot, Eugene, and Bernadotte, in front of the plateau of Wagram; and Bessières, with the Imperial Guards and reserve cavalry, in the rear of the centre round Raschdorf.¹

¹ Pel. iv.
197, 199.
Jom.iii.266.
Sav.iv.106,
107. Vict.
et Conq.
xix. 205.

38.
The Arch-
duke re-
solves to
assume the
offensive.
July 6.

The brilliant success which had crowned the action on the night of the 5th, made an important change in the dispositions of the Archduke. Perceiving the determined resolution of his troops, and encouraged by the important check which they had given to the enemy, even though the latter were possessed of a considerable superiority of force, he resolved to assume the offensive, and anticipate the designs of the French Emperor by a general attack with all his forces. This resolution was taken at midnight on the 5th, and at two in the following morning, orders were despatched to the Archduke John to hasten up with all his disposable force to the scene of action. He was understood to be at Marchegg, thirteen miles from the right flank of the French army; but he might with ease arrive on the field by one o'clock in the afternoon, when it was hoped his appearance with thirty thousand fresh troops would be attended with the most important effects. Foreseeing, from the attack of the preceding evening, that the principal efforts of the enemy would be directed against the plateau of Wagram, where the ground was naturally strong, the Archduke resolved to make his chief effort on his right against Aspern and Essling, in order to menace the bridges and communica-

tions of the French army. Success in this direction, combined with the attack of the Archduke John on the same important points from the left, promised entirely to neutralise any advantage which the enemy might gain in front of Wagram ; and, in fact, threatened as Napoleon would thus be in the rear and on either flank, an imprudent advance in the centre would only augment the dangers of his situation, by withdrawing the main body of the army farther from the means of retreat.¹

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1809.

¹ Sav. iv.
109. Pel. iv.
199, 200.
Kausler,
385. Stut.
324, 326.

With these views, Kollowrath and Klenau were concentrated on the Austrian right, on the eastern slope of the Bisamberg, and reinforced to fifty thousand men by the troops of Lichtenstein and Hiller ; Rosenberg, on the left, received orders to descend towards Glinzendorf, in order to form a junction with, and co-operate in the expected attack of the Archduke John on the left ; Bellegarde, during the night, was pushed on to Aderklaa, which the Saxons evacuated in disorder on his approach ; while Hohenzollern, and the reserve grenadiers and cavalry, occupied the line of the Russbach and the crest of the plateau, having strong parties both in Wagram and Baumersdorf. Thus the Imperialists, when the shock commenced in the morning, formed an immense semicircle, with their strength thrown into the two wings ; the French, an interior convex quadrant, with their columns issuing like the folds of a fan from its centre. The forces of the former were overwhelming on the right, and their left was almost impregnable, from the strength of the plateau of Wàgram, so fatally experienced on the preceding evening ; but the centre of their position, towards Süssenbrunn, naturally weak, was not so strongly defended by troops as to promise an effectual resistance to the great French force which was concentrated in its front.²

39.
His plan of
attack.

² Pel. iv.
199, 200.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
205, 206.
Sav. iv. 109.
Jom. iii. 267.
Kausler,
385. Stut.
324, 329.

It was intended by the Archduke, that Kollowrath and Klenau, with the right wing, should commence the attack ; but the difficulty of conveying the orders in time

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1809.

40.

Commence-
ment of the
battle of
Wagram.
July 6.

to the extreme points of so extensive a line was such, that before these distant generals could arrive at the scene of action, it had already begun in the centre and left. At daybreak Napoleon was not yet on horseback, but only preparing the grand attack which he meditated on the enemy's centre, when suddenly the discharge of cannon was heard on his right; and soon after, the increasing roar and advancing smoke in that direction indicated that the Austrian right wing was seriously engaged, and making rapid progress. Immediately after, intelligence arrived that the Russbach was passed, Glinzendorf threatened by Rosenberg on the right, and Aderskloa, abandoned by Bernadotte on the preceding night, occupied in force by Bellegarde in the centre. Notwithstanding all his activity, the French Emperor was anticipated in the offensive, and the direction in which the Imperialists had commenced their attack, rendered him apprehensive that the Archduke John had come up during the night, and that his right flank was about to be turned by an overwhelming force. Instantly appreciating the importance of such a combined attack, Napoleon hastened with his Guards and reserves of cuirassiers to the scene of action, and drew up the artillery of the Guard in such a position as to command the right of Rosenberg's corps, which had now advanced near to Glinzendorf; but hardly had these powerful reinforcements arrived near that village, when the Austrian advance was arrested. In effect Prince Charles, finding that the Archduke John had not arrived, and that the enemy had moved an overwhelming force in that direction, ordered Rosenberg to suspend his attack, and soon after he withdrew his troops behind the Russbach; but they sustained a considerable loss in their retreat, from the charges of the French cuirassiers, and the cannonade of the artillery of the Guard on their flank.¹

¹ Sav. iv.
108, 203,
207. Jom.
iii. 267.
Kausler,
385, 386.

Hardly was this alarm dispelled on his right, when Napoleon received still more disquieting intelligence from

his centre and left. The first rays of the sun had glittered on the bayonets of Klenau and Kollowrath's corps as they descended the verdant slopes behind Stammersdorf, and joined Hiller and Lichtenstein near Leopoldau; and already the sound of their cannon towards Breitenlee and Aspern told but too clearly the progress they were making to turn the left flank of the French army. But the danger in the centre was still more pressing. Massena, in executing his prescribed movements from the left to the centre of the field of battle, had attacked Aderklaa with his leading division under Cara St-Cyr. The village was speedily carried by the gallantry of the 24th regiment; but, instead of merely occupying the houses, and strengthening himself in so important a point, St-Cyr pushed through to the opposite side, and brought his troops within range of a terrible fire of grape and musketry from Bellegarde's corps, drawn up in force on the plain betwixt that and Wagram. The French, breathless with their advance, were so shattered by the discharge that they suddenly recoiled, and being at the same time charged in flank by the Austrian cavalry, were pushed back in confusion into Aderklaa. At the same time the Archduke Charles, who felt the full value of this post, hastened to the spot with the grenadiers of Aspre, and charged the assailants with such vigour that they were driven out of the village at the point of the bayonet, broken in the plain beyond, and thrown back in utter disorder upon the Saxon, Baden, and Darmstadt contingents, forming Bernadotte's corps, who disbanded and fled in such confusion that they overwhelmed Massena, who, although severely bruised by a fall off his horse, was in the field in his calèche; and he actually made the dragoons about his person charge them as if they had been enemies.^{1*} Transported

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1809.

41.
Defeat of
Massena in
the centre.

¹ Sav. iv.
109, 110.
Pel. iv. 210,
212. Jom.
iii. 268.
Kausler,
386. Arch-
duke
Charles's
Account.

* A young Saxon colonel, during the rout of the corps, finding his efforts, prayers, and menaces alike ineffectual to prevent his men from dispersing, advanced with his standard in his hand to a regiment of the French Imperial Guard which had just come up, and throwing himself into their ranks, said,

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1809.

42.
Napoleon's
measures to
arrest the
disorder.

by the animation of the charge, the Archduke Charles pushed forward, at the head of his brave grenadiers, a considerable way in front of Aderklaa, where he found himself, almost alone, so near the enemy that he heard a French officer command his voltigeurs to make him prisoner, and received a ball in the shoulder before he could regain the breathless ranks of his followers.

Napoleon perceived from afar the disorder of the left of his centre, and instantly hastened to the spot to arrest it. Directing Davoust to attack Neusiedel, and press the Austrian left, and ordering his Guards to counter-march as rapidly as possible from right to left across the whole field, which they had so lately traversed in the opposite direction, he himself set out at the gallop, followed by the squadrons of his cuirassiers and horse-artillery of the Guard, and soon arrived at the spot where Massena, almost alone in his chariot in the midst of the fugitives who overspread the plain, was making brave efforts to arrest the disorder. He instantly alighted from his horse, mounted into the chariot beside the marshal, conversed a few seconds with him, and pointing to the tower of Neusiedel, the steeples of Wagram, Süssenbrunn and Aspern, made all around him comprehend that a grand movement was in preparation to check the enemy. The confusion was in some degree arrested by the presence of the Emperor and the powerful reinforcement which he brought with him, and immediately the prescribed alteration in the order of battle commenced: Massena's corps, which had almost all broken, was re-formed under cover of the artillery and cavalry of the Guard, and commenced a countermarch by battalions in close column towards Aspern;¹ while the cuirassiers of Nansouty, led on by Bessières in person, by repeated

¹ Pel. iv.
209, 211.
Sav. iv. 110.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
207, 208.

"Frenchmen, I trust to you this standard: you, I am sure, will defend it: my regiment is to be found wherever courageous resistance is made to the enemy." How many instances of heroism in all nations did the Revolutionary war bring forth! What elevation of soul did it occasion?—See *Victoires et Conquêtes*, xix. 218.

charges, kept at bay the threatening columns of the enemy. While heading one of these charges, Bessières was struck by a cannon-shot, which tore his thigh, killed his horse, and so disfigured his person that he was taken up for dead.

The French infantry, restored to order by the efforts of the Emperor, executed the prescribed movements athwart the field of battle with the most perfect regularity, though torn in pieces all the way by a terrible fire of artillery from the Austrian right wing on their flank. But their departure from the neighbourhood of Aderklaa, before the infantry of the Guard and the reserves had come up, weakened seriously the French line, which was reduced to the defensive at the most important point of the whole field—the salient angle running into the Austrian position—and compelled to remain stationary under a tremendous cross-fire of artillery from the hostile batteries on either side of the angle. The courage of the soldiers quivered under this dreadful trial, where war exhibited all its dangers with none of its excitement, and several battalions disbanded and fled. Napoleon, meanwhile, calm and collected in the midst of the general disquietude, rode backwards and forwards for an hour amidst a storm of cannon-balls, unmoved by personal danger, but casting frequent and anxious looks towards Neusiedel, where the prescribed attack by Davoust was every moment expected to make itself known, from the advancing cannonade and smoke in that direction. He was mounted on a snow-white charger called Euphrates, a present from the King of Persia; and when the firing was most vehement, he rode in front of the line, which was too far distant from the enemy to return a shot from the infantry, or from guns of ordinary calibre, though raked in all directions by the heavy batteries of the Austrians. His suite expected every moment to see him struck down by a cannon-ball:¹ but, albeit noways insensible to the dis-

CHAP.
LIX.
1809.

43.
Dreadful
trial to
which the
troops were
exposed in
executing
them.

¹ Sav. iv.
110, 111.
Pel. iv. 210,
212. Jom.
iii. 268.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
208.

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LIX.

1809.

44.
Splendid
progress of
the Austrian
right to-
wards
Essling.

astrous consequences which would in all likelihood attend his fall, he felt too strongly the necessity of his presence to preserve order at that important point, to shrink for a moment from the scene of danger.

It was not surprising that Napoleon exposed himself so much to maintain this salient angle of his position, without recalling Massena, or weakening his corps on the right; for the danger had become so pressing from the progress of the Austrians on the left, that the battle appeared irrecoverably lost. At ten o'clock, Kollowrath and Klenau, preceded by sixty pieces of cannon, had swept the whole field of battle. After occupying Breitenlee and Neuwirthaus, they had fallen with an overwhelming superiority of force on Boudet and le Grand, who, with eighteen thousand men, had been left to keep their ground against such fearful odds, put them to the rout, captured all their artillery and four thousand prisoners, and driven them through Aspern into the French *tête-de-pont* on the edge of the Danube. Following up this important success, the Austrians re-entered the intrenchments in front of the island of Lobau, regained all the redoubts evacuated on the preceding day, occupied Essling, and pushed their advanced posts so near to the bridges leading to Enzersdorf, that the French heavy guns, on the shores of the island, opened their fire to protect the retreat of the army, with as much vehemence as they had done forty hours before to cover the passage of the river. Driving the enemy before them like chaff before the wind, the whole Austrian right, with loud shouts, pressed on towards Enzersdorf. Startled by the unexpected sound, which was soon heard even above the thunder of the artillery in front, the French reserve parks and baggage trains were seized with a universal panic; fugitives on all sides overspread the field in rear of the army, and fled to the bridges, which were speedily choked up by the throng. Cries of "All is lost! the bridges are taken!" were already heard in the ranks. An

eyewitness in the French interest confesses that when, from the summit of the observatory at Vienna, he beheld the long line of white uniforms extending from the field of battle to the island of Lobau, directly in the rear of the French lines, he gave over the cause of the Emperor as lost; while the anxious crowds who thronged the steeples of Vienna, and with beating hearts and speechless emotion watched the advancing fire of the columns, above all the roar of the artillery heard the Austrian cheers, and already the thrilling voice was heard in the capital, "The country is saved!"^{1*}

But Providence had decreed it otherwise; and four years more of misery and bondage were destined to punish the faults and unite the hearts of Germany. While this splendid success attended the efforts of the Austrian right, their left, against which Napoleon had accumulated his forces under Davoust, had undergone a serious reverse. This illustrious chief, who had fifty thousand admirable troops at his command, including three divisions of the reserve cavalry, had no sooner received Napoleon's directions to attack the Austrians on the plateau, than he despatched Friant and Morand with the veterans who had gained the day at Auerstadt, to cross the Russbach below Glinzendorf, ascend the valley above Neusiedel, and turn the extreme left of the enemy; while he himself, with the two other divisions, attacked that village in front; and Oudinot was ordered to keep Hohenzollern in check, in the centre of the plateau behind Baumersdorf. It required some time to execute, out of the range of the enemy's cannon, this movement round

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1809.

¹ Archduke Charles's Official Account of Wagram, Ann. Reg. 1809. App. to Chron. Sav. iv. 110. Pel. iv. 213, 214. Vict. et Conq. xix. 208.

45.

Success of Davoust against the Austrian left wing.

* "Agité des sentiments divers que devait inspirer à tout cœur Français, la lutte gigantesque engagée dans cette memorable journée, je m'étais établi à l'observatoire de Vienne, d'où je suivais, quoique confusément, les variations de la bataille. Malgré une confiance superstitieuse dans l'Espagne d'infailibilité militaire de l'Empereur, ce ne fut pas sans un vif effroi que je vis les couleurs Autrichiennes interposés sur une si longue ligne, et presque jusqu'à l'île de Lobau, entre l'armée Française et le Danube. Quelle joie lorsque tout-à-coup ce mouvement retrogradant de cette aile de l'armée ennemie nous fit supposer avec raison qu'elle était entraînée dans une retraite générale!"—BIGNON, viii. 302, note.

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the extremity of his position ; for sixty pieces of cannon, disposed along the front and eastern face of the plateau, swept the whole level ground at its feet, as far as the guns would carry. At ten o'clock, however, the two divisions of Friant and Morand had crossed the Russbach, supported by a numerous artillery and ten thousand horse, under Grouchy, Montbrun, and Arighi. Rosenberg, meanwhile, perceiving the danger with which he was threatened, had accumulated his forces in strength at Neusiedel and the angle of the plateau behind it ; and with his troops drawn up, facing outwards, on the two sides of a right-angled triangle, was prepared to maintain his important position against the formidable odds which were about to assail him ; while the guns on the crest of the plateau behind his lines replied to the more numerous batteries of the enemy in the plain below with vigour and effect.¹

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xix.
209. Pel. iv.
226, 227.
Kausler,
387.

46.
Terrible
shock which
there took
place.

Morand's division came first into action, and boldly mounted the heights ; but, notwithstanding the gallantry of their attack, they were driven back in disorder by the destructive fire of the Austrian cannon, and the rapid discharges of their musketry. Upon this Friant came up to his support ; and Morand, rallying under cover of his lines, recommenced a furious assault on the enemy, and, after a desperate resistance, succeeded in ascending the plateau on its eastern front. Friant at the same time, passing farther on, made his way to the summit. The tower of Neusiedel, however, still held out, though a powerful French battery thundered against it from an adjoining height to the eastward ; and the Austrian cavalry, who were drawn up at the foot of the ascent, essayed several charges against the ponderous steel-clad cuirassiers of Arighi and Grouchy. The shock was terrible. The French proved at first victorious, and routed Rosenberg's horse with great slaughter.² Hohenzollern's cuirassiers next came up to avenge the disaster, and Grouchy in his turn was broken and forced

² Kausler,
387. Jom.
iii. 272, 273.
Pel. iv. 225,
228. Vict.
et Conq.
xix. 209.

back. Montbrun then charged the victorious Austrians, when blown by their rapid advance, with decisive effect : and, after desperate acts of gallantry on both sides, they were compelled to follow the retrograde movement of their infantry, and abandon the eastern front of the plateau.

While this important advantage was gained by the French on the eastern face of the plateau, a furious combat was raging around Neusiedel. Davoust in person there led on the divisions Gudin and Puthod to the attack, with extraordinary vigour : the resistance by the Prince of Hesse-Homburg was equally obstinate ; and some reinforcements despatched by Hohenzollern long enabled that gallant officer to maintain his ground against greatly superior forces. At length, however, the Austrians were driven by main force from the houses, and pushed back to the foot of the plateau : there they again made a stand, and for long strove with desperate resolution to make good the tower, and prevent Davoust from debouching from the village. In this terrible strife Nordman and Veczay were killed — Hesse-Homburg, Muger, War teachben, and almost all the Austrian generals, wounded ; while, on the French side, Gudin received four wounds, and almost all his generals were struck down. At length the tower was carried by assault, and the enemy's infantry driven in disorder from the ground they had so long defended in its rear. Davoust, upon this, ordered the cuirassiers of Arighi to charge the retreating lines, and soon the slope of the plateau glittered with the dazzling rays of their helmets. But the horsemen got entangled in broken ground, among the huts of the Austrian bivouacs ; and the few who reached the summit were so grievously shattered by the point-blank fire of the guns posted there, that the whole were driven headlong down, with severe loss, into the plain. Notwithstanding this success, however, Rosenberg was unable to keep his ground on the

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47.
Neusiedel is
taken, and
the Austrian
left driven
back.

Atlas,
Plate 59.

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¹ Kausler,
387. Jom.
iii. 272.
Pel. iv. 229,
231. Vict.
et Conq.
xix. 209.

angle of the plateau above Neusiedel, after the tower had fallen. His left was turned by Morand and Friant, who had established themselves on the crest of the plateau; and on the other side Oudinot, transported by the enthusiasm of the moment, had converted his feigned into a real attack, and, though repeatedly repulsed, had at length made his way across the Russbach, near Baumersdorf, and despite all the efforts of Hohenzollern, who was weakened by the succours sent to Neusiedel, reached the crest of the plateau. Threatened thus on both flanks, Rosenberg drew back in excellent order, still facing to the eastward, and, forming a junction with Hohenzollern, took up a position towards the centre of the plateau, nearly at right angles to the line of the Russbach, and covering two-thirds of its surface; while Davoust, apprehensive of being taken in rear by the Archduke John, whose approach to the field was already announced by the scouts of both armies, showed no disposition to molest him in the new line which he had occupied.¹

48.
Grand at-
tack by
Napoleon
from the
centre.

Napoleon was still riding with his suite in the perilous angle in front of Aderklaa, when these alternate disasters and successes were passing on either wing of his army. The accounts which he received from his left were every moment more alarming. Officers in breathless haste arrived every ten minutes, to announce the fearful progress of the enemy in that direction. "The cannon," said one, "which you hear in the rear is that of the Austrians:" the Emperor made no answer. "The division Boudet is driven back into the island of Lobau, and he has lost his artillery," said another: still no answer; but his eyes were anxiously turned to the tower of Neusiedel, which was visible from all parts of the plain; and he frequently asked if the fire was on the east or west of that building. At length Davoust's cannon were distinctly seen to pass Neusiedel, and the slopes of the plateau were enveloped in smoke. "Hasten back to

Massena," said he to the aide-de-camp, "and tell him to commence his attack—never mind Boudet's guns: the battle is gained." At the same time he despatched orders in all directions for offensive operations; Bessières, with ten regiments of the reserve cavalry, was directed to charge the Austrian right wing, which had advanced so far into the French rear, in flank; while Massena, who had now got back to his original ground near Aspern, assailed it in front; Eugene, Marmont, and Bernadotte, were to assault Wagram; Oudinot and Davoust to renew their attacks, and if possible drive the enemy from the plateau; while the Emperor in person prepared the decisive effort, by a grand charge of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, in the centre. For this purpose Eugene's corps, which had marched across the field from Baumersdorf, was arranged in close columns of three divisions—Macdonald in the central division, consisting of eight strong battalions; on either flank were six, drawn up in close array; behind them marched Serras's division and Wrede's Bavarians; the light horse of the Guard and the cuirassiers of Nansouty covered their flanks; a hundred pieces of cannon, chiefly of the Guard under Drouot, which had now come up from Neusiedel, admirably served, preceded the whole, and spread death far and wide; while the Emperor himself, with the cavalry and infantry of the Old Guard, closed the array, on the success of which he had staked his fortune and his crown.¹

Napoleon himself gave the signal to this terrible column to advance: its instructions were to move right upon the steeple of Süssenbrunn, leaving Aderklaa to the right. The Archduke early perceived the effort which was preparing against his centre, and made every possible disposition to resist it. The lines were doubled; the reserves of cavalry and the right of Bellegarde's corps brought up to the menaced point; artillery on either side planted in great abundance, so as to open a cross-fire on the advan-

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¹ Jom. iii.
272, 273.
Sav. iv. 112,
213. Pel. iv.
121, 223.
Kausler,
388. Dum.
Souv. ii.
375.

49.
Decisive
advance of
Macdonald
in the cen-
tre.

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cing column ; while the Archduke in person hastened to the spot with his whole staff, to be in a situation to act with promptitude in the terrible crisis which was approaching. Hardly had he arrived, when Lauriston and Drouot's artillery approached ; the cannoneers, regardless of the cross-fire of the hostile batteries, advanced at the trot to within half cannon-shot, and then opened a prodigious fire from their hundred pieces, which was sustained with such rapidity that it forced back the Austrian line immediately in front, and dismounted several of their guns. Taking advantage of the confusion produced by this discharge, Macdonald advanced with his column directly in at the opening, and pierced the Imperial centre. Aderklaa and Breitenlee were soon passed ; Süssenbrunn was menaced. Moving steadily forward through the wreck of guns, the dead, and the dying, this undaunted column, preceded by its terrific battery incessantly firing, pushed on half a league beyond the front, in other points, of the enemy's line. In proportion as it advanced, however, it became enveloped by fire : the guns were gradually dismounted or silenced, and the infantry emerged through their wreck to the front. The Austrians drew off their front line upon their second, and both falling back, formed a sort of wall on each side of the French column, from whence issued a dreadful fire of grape and musketry on either flank of the assailants. Still Macdonald pressed on with unconquerable resolution : in the midst of a frightful storm of bullets, his ranks were unshaken ; the destinies of Europe were in his hands, and he was worthy of the mission. The loss he experienced, however, was enormous ; at every step huge chasms were made in his ranks, whole files were struck down by cannon-shot, and at length his eight dense battalions were reduced to fifteen hundred men ! Isolated in the midst of enemies, this band of heroes was compelled to halt.¹ The empire rocked to its foundation :

¹ Kausler,
388. Pel. iv.
221, 224.
Sav. iv. 113.
Jom. iv. 273.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
210.

it was the rout of a similar body of the Imperial Guard at Waterloo that hurled Napoleon to the rock of St Helena.

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Following with intense anxiety the advance of this column, however, the Emperor was at hand to support it. The divisions on the flank, those of Durutte and Pacthod, which had insensibly fallen behind during the advance of Macdonald with the central column, were ordered to move forward; Serras and Wrede were hastened up to his aid; and the Young Guard, under Reille, detached to support their attack. This last succour, however, almost exhausted the reserves of Napoleon. "Husband your men as much as possible," said he to Reille, as he gave him the command; "I have now no other reserve but the two regiments of the Old Guard." At the same time Nansouty, with the cuirassiers on the left, and Walther, with the dragoons on the right of Macdonald's column, received orders to charge the masses in front of them, and Oudinot, Eugene, and Marmont to press the enemy as much as possible towards Aderklaa and Wagram. The Emperor's anxiety was extreme as the cuirassiers of the Guard passed him at a quick trot: plunging his sword in the air, he exclaimed, "No sabreing! Give point, give point!"¹

50.
Measures of
Napoleon to
support that
attack.

¹ Kausler,
388, 389.
Sav. iv. 112,
113. Pelet,
iv. 225, 226.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
210, 211.
Dum. Souv.
ii. 376.

The charges of the cavalry proved most unfortunate. Nansouty led on the charge on the left, at the head of his cuirassiers; but such was the severity of the fire which they immediately encountered, that in a few minutes twelve hundred horsemen were struck down by cannon-balls, and the whole were compelled to halt and retire, before they even reached the enemy. The dragoons on the right, under Walther, met with the same fate; and, after sustaining a grievous loss, were driven back under cover of the foot-soldiers. But the infantry were more successful. No sooner did Macdonald perceive that the divisions of Pacthod, Durutte, Serras, and Wrede, had come up to his flanks, and that Reille was

51.
Retreat of
the Arch-
duke.

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advancing to his support, than he resumed his forward movement. The whole mass moved on with a steady front, again preceded by its terrible battery; and the Archduke, despairing now of maintaining his position, when assailed at the crisis of the day by such a formidable accession of force in the now broken part of his line, gave directions for a general retreat. It was executed, however, in the most admirable order—the infantry retiring by echelon, and alternately marching and facing about to pour destructive volleys into the ranks of the pursuers. Never was more clearly evinced the importance of moral resolution in war. When the Archduke gave orders to retreat, affairs were not so critical as they were at Waterloo, when the last attack of the Imperial Guard was made, and the Archduke John was on the eve of attacking the French flank with as decisive effect as the indefatigable Blücher there did from the defiles of St Lambert.¹

¹ Pel. iv. 234, 238. Archduke Charles's Official Account, Ann. Reg. 1809. Kausler, 389.

52.
Appearance
of the Aus-
trian army,
and bloody
encounters
on its re-
treat.

The field of battle, as seen from the steeples of Vienna, now presented a magnificent spectacle. Massena, upon the retreat of Kollowrath and Klenau, readily regained Essling and Aspern, and the Austrian army, in a line nearly perpendicular to the Danube, slowly and deliberately retired: while the French host formed a vast line of sabres and bayonets, from the banks of the river to the summit of the plateau of Wagram, on which the rays of the sun, now beginning to decline, glanced with extraordinary splendour. Vast volumes of smoke at intervals indicated the position of the opposing batteries; a white curling line marked the advance and line of the infantry;*

* "Intanto il sol, che da' celesti campi
Va più sempre avanzando e in alto ascende,
L'arme percote, e ne trae fiammi e lampi
Tremuli e chiari, onde le viste offende.
L'aria par di faville intorno avvampi,
E quasi d'alto incendio in forma splende;
E co' fieri nitriti il suono accorda,
Del ferro scosso, e le campagne assorda."

Tasso, *Ger. Lib. i. 73.*

and gleams of almost intolerable brightness were reflected from the helmets and cuirasses of the cavalry. A bloody encounter took place at Gerasdorf, which the rearguard of Kollowrath long held with unconquerable bravery ; but it was at length carried by the chasseurs of the Guard. Wagram yielded to the impetuous assaults of Oudinot, and two battalions were made prisoners. But, with this exception, the retreat of the Austrians was conducted with hardly any loss. The Archduke, with consummate skill, availed himself of every advantage of ground to retard the enemy ; and so exhausted were the French by their efforts, that they displayed very little vigour in the pursuit. Neither cannons nor prisoners were taken ; the cavalry hardly charged : but for the retrograde movement of one army and the advance of the other, it would have been impossible to have decided which had gained the advantage in the fight. Napoleon was much chagrined at this indecisive result, and suffered his ill-humour to exhale in open reproaches against the cavalry generals of the Guard. "Was ever anything seen like this ? Neither prisoners nor guns ! This day will be attended with no results." At nightfall, the Austrians occupied a line along the heights behind Stammersdorf, from which their right wing had descended in the morning, along the great road to Brunn, through Hebersdorf, to Obersdorf ; while the French bivouacked in the plain, three miles in their front, from the edge of the Danube near Florisdorf, perpendicularly up to Sauring, at the foot of the hills.¹

It was towards the close of this obstinately contested battle that the Archduke John approached the field. Between three and four o'clock his columns came up to Loibersdorf and Ober Siebenbrunn ; while his advanced posts reached Neusiedel, and even approached Wagram, which the French troops had passed through not an hour before in pursuit of the Austrian grand army ! Finding, however, upon his arrival there, that his brother had

¹ Kausler, 389, 390. Pelet, iv. 234, 238. Archduke Charles's Official Account, Ann. Reg. 1809, App. to Chron. Sav. iv. 114. Vict. et Cong. xix. 211, 212. Dum. Souv. iii. 376, 377.

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abandoned the field, and was retiring at all points towards the Bisamberg, he justly conceived apprehensions concerning his own situation, left alone with forty thousand men in the rear of the Grand Army, and gave orders to retreat. He marched till after dark, and regained Marchegg before midnight. An incident occurred, however, soon after he retired, which demonstrated in the most striking manner the vital importance of his co-operation, and the decisive effect which might have arisen from it, had he come up, as he had been ordered, at an earlier hour of the day.¹

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xix.
215. Jom.
iii. 276. Sav.
iv. 115.

54.
Striking
nocturnal
alarm which
illustrated
it.

The Emperor, worn out with fatigue, had lain down to rest, surrounded by his Guards, in the plain between Süssenbrunn and Aderklaa, when cries of alarm were heard from the rear. The drums immediately beat at all points; the infantry hastily formed in squares, the artillerymen stood to their guns, the cavalry saddled their horses. Napoleon himself mounted his horse, and asked what was the cause of the alarm. "It is nothing, sire," replied Charles Lebrun, one of his aides-de-camp—"merely a few marauders." "What do you call nothing?" replied the Emperor warmly. "Know, sir, there are no trifling events in war: nothing endangers an army like an imprudent security. Return to see what is the matter, and come back quickly to render me an account."* Meanwhile he prepared everything for a nocturnal combat, and the aspect of affairs in the rear of the army was such as to call forth all his solicitude. The artillery, baggage-waggons, stragglers, and camp-followers, who crowded the rear, were flying in disorder

* "Cauto guerrier pugnando
Già vincitor si vede;
Ma non depone il brando,
Ma non si fida ancor:
Chè, le nemiche prede
Se spensierato aduna,
Cambia talor fortuna
Col vinto il vincitor."

METASTASIO, *Ciro*, Act ii. scene 7.

to the Danube ; the plain was covered with fugitives, the entrance of the bridges blocked up with carriages, and many who even had the river between them and the supposed danger, continued their flight, and never drew bridle till they were within the ramparts of Vienna. The alarm spread like wildfire from rank to rank : the Guard even was shaken : the victors for a moment doubted of the fate of the day.* The ranks presented the appearance of a general rout ; and yet the whole was occasioned by a single squadron of the Archduke John's cavalry, which had been far advanced towards Wagram, and, seeking to regain, as he retired, the road to Presburg, had cut down some French marauders in one of the villages on the east of the field ! So vital was the line of communication on which that prince was intended to act, and so important were the results which must have ensued from his co-operation, if it had taken place, as the generalissimo was entitled to expect, at an earlier period of the day.¹

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¹ Jom. iii.
266, 277,
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
215. Sav. v.
115.

Such was the memorable battle of Wagram, one of the greatest and most obstinately contested of the whole war, and perhaps the most glorious in the whole Austrian annals. The loss on both sides was immense ; twenty-five thousand brave men on each side were killed or wounded, without any decisive result having been obtained. The other trophies were nearly equally divided ; the Austrian right wing had made five thousand prisoners, and two thousand of their own wounded† had

55.
Results of
the battle.

* A similar event occurred to the army of Alexander, after the battle of Arbela:—"Sed nullum eo die majus periculum adiit, quam dum copias reducit in castra. Pauci eum (Alexandrum) et incompositi sequebantur, ovantes victoria—quippe omnes hostes aut in fugam effusos, aut in acie credebant cecedisse ; quum repentē ex adverso apparuit agmen equitum, qui primo inhibuere cursum ; deinde, Macedonum paucitate conspectā, turmas in obvios concitaverunt. Ante signa rex ibat, dissimulato magis periculo, quam spreto ; nec defuit ei perpetua in dubiis rebus felicitas. Invasere turbatos amici quoque ; nec Persæ inulti cadebant : quippe non universæ acies, quam hæ tumultuariæ manus, vehementius iniere certamen. Tandem barbari, quum, obscurâ luce, fuga tutior videretur esse quam pugna, diversis agminibus abiēre."—QUINTUS CURTIUS, lib. iv. chap. 16.

† The 25th Bulletin says the French took 20,000 prisoners, forty pieces of

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¹ Kausler,
389, 390.
Pelet, iv.
238.

56.
The loss of
the battle
was owing
to the Arch-
duke John's
neglect of
orders.

fallen into the hands of the enemy in the centre of the plain. They were nowhere defeated : no panics disgraced their lines, no columns laid down their arms. Slowly, at the command of their chief alone, they retired in regular order from the field without the loss of either prisoners or cannon, and inspiring, even to the last, dread to the enemy who followed their steps.¹

To have maintained such a conflict with greatly inferior forces, against Napoleon at the head of a hundred and eighty thousand men, was itself no ordinary distinction. But this is not all : if their forces had all joined in the action, and they had thereby been restored to an equality with the enemy, there can be no doubt the result would have been different. But for the failure of the Archduke John to come up at the period assigned to him, the battle would have terminated in a glorious and decisive victory. Had that prince made his appearance on the field either at six in the morning, when Rosenberg, in anticipation of his co-operation, advanced to Glinzendorf ; or later, when Kollowrath and Klenau had routed the French left wing, and their leading columns were approaching the bridges of Lobau ; or even when the fate of Europe hung in suspense on the advance of Mac-

² Scott's Na-
poleon, vi.
234.

cannon, and ten standards; and Sir Walter Scott has heedlessly transcribed that statement.² It is, however, grossly inaccurate, and is proved to be so even by the warmest partisans of Napoleon. "The enemy retired," says Savary, who was by the Emperor's side through the whole battle, "at four o'clock, and abandoned to us the field of battle, but *without prisoners or cannon*, and after having fought in such a manner as to render every prudent man cautious of engaging in a rash enterprise: we followed without pressing him, for the truth is, he had not been at all cut up. He made head against us everywhere; his troops were very numerous, and *he had, in reality, no reason for retiring*; though fortunately for us he did so, and thus gave to France all the moral advantages of a victory."³ Jomini says, "The Archduke retreated during the night, *leaving us no other trophies* but some thousand wounded or prisoners, and a few dismounted cannon. Their loss was 25,000 men; ours was about the same."⁴ Sir Walter's *Life of Napoleon* is a surprising work, considering that it was written in little more than twelve months, by an author whose previous years had been spent in studies of a different description; but his narrative is often little more than a transcript of the bulletins or *Annual Register*, and it is not surprising that in less than two years he could not, under severe anxiety and affliction, master what would have required twenty years, in Gibbon's words, "of health, leisure, and perseverance."—See LOCKHART'S *Life of Scott*, vii. 42.

³ Savary, iv.
114, 115, 116.

⁴ Jomini, iii.
276.

donald's column in the centre, there can be no doubt that Napoleon would have been totally defeated, and possibly a disaster as great as that of Waterloo would have effected, six years before that memorable event, the deliverance of Europe. Experience in every age has demonstrated, that after the protracted excitement of a great battle the bravest soldiers become unstrung,* and at such a moment the attack of a few fresh troops often produces the most extraordinary results. It is this which so often has chained success to the effort of a reserve in the close of an obstinately disputed day; which made Kellermann's charge at Marengo snatch victory from the grasp of the triumphant Austrians; and the onset of Sir Hussey Vivian's brigade on the flank of the Old Guard at Waterloo, overthrow at once the military fabric of the French empire.¹

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¹ Kausler,
389. Pel. iv.
238. Jom.
iii. 275.

The general terror inspired in Napoleon's rear by the capture of Aspern and Essling in the morning; the marvellous panic occasioned by the charge of a squadron of hussars on their extreme right at night, demonstrated that the disaster at Aspern had inspired the French troops with a nervous disquietude about the bridges in their rear; and that any alarm in that quarter was likely

57.
Decisive
evidence
which exists
of this.

* "The long and fearful excitement of battle once relaxed, leaves the toil-worn frame nerveless and exhausted, and the mind itself destitute of the energy requisite for any renewal of vigorous exertion. A bold onset made by a few resolute men on troops who have maintained, even successfully, a hard day's combat, is almost sure to turn the scale in favour of the new assailants.—*Life of Wallenstein*, by LIEUT.-COLONEL MITCHELL, p. 259; a work written with the spirit of a soldier, the principles of a patriot, and the penetration of a statesman.

† "If we reflect," says General Pelet, the able historian of this campaign, himself an actor in the mighty events he commemorates, and withal an ardent partisan of Napoleon, "on the result of the battle of Fontenoy; if the fifteen hundred who remained of Macdonald's corps had been surrounded and charged by fresh troops assembled from the right and the left, and those who remained on the heights of Stammersdorf, the battle might still have been gained by the Austrians. The Emperor had no other reserve at his disposal but two regiments of the Old Guard: the isle of Lobau was threatened, and all around it was in the utmost disorder. The Archduke had many more forces not engaged than were required to have made that attack."—PELET, iv. 248.

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to produce even greater effect on them than on troops of less military foresight and experience. What, then, must have been the effect of thirty thousand fresh troops suddenly thrown into the rear of the French army, where there was no reserve to oppose them, at the moment when the victorious shouts of Kollowrath's troops, and the ominous sound of the cannon of Lobau, announced that their retreat was all but cut off; or when the heroic column of Macdonald, wasted away to fifteen hundred men, had checked its advance in front of Süssenbrunn? The Archduke John is a most accomplished prince, and as a private individual no one has greater title to esteem; but either his jealousy of his brother, or his incapacity to perceive the object of combined operations, twice in that single campaign proved fatal to his country: once when he disobeyed the orders of the Archduke Charles to combine with Kollowrath an attack on the bridge of Lintz, on the French line of communication, immediately after the battle of Aspern; and again, by his tardiness in obeying the orders of the same generalissimo to hasten to the theatre of decisive events on the field of Wagram.^{1*}

The day after the battle, Napoleon, according to his usual custom, rode over the field of battle. Without the

¹ Kausler,
389, 390.
Pelet, iv.
238, 239.
Jom. iii.
275, 276.

* Orders to hasten up to Enzersdorf were despatched by the Archduke Charles to the Archduke John on the evening of the 4th July. On the same night Prince Eugene's army, to which he was opposed, entered the island of Lobau. The Archduke John lay on the night of the 4th at Presburg, distant ten leagues from Wagram. He received the despatch at five in the morning of the 5th, and instead of setting out, as he should have done, in a few hours, he did not move *till midnight* on the 5th, and, in consequence, had only reached Marchegg, five leagues on the road, at ten o'clock on the 6th—the very time when he should have been attacking the French right at Loibersdorf or Glinzendorf. The Archduke Charles, conceiving he had, in obedience to his instructions, arrived there on the night of the 5th, had sent an order to him, as already mentioned, to co-operate in the attack on the latter village in the morning, which he could easily have done had he arrived there the night before, as it is only four leagues distant from the extreme French right; whereas he only appeared on the ground at half-past three in the afternoon, after the general retreat had commenced. Prince John marched from Presburg to near Glinzendorf, between midnight on the 5th and four o'clock p. m. on the 6th, that is, in sixteen hours, which was as expeditious as could have been expected. Had he set out seven hours after getting his orders, *i. e.* at

features of horror which had imprinted so awful a character on that of Eylau, it presented some circumstances of a still more frightful and distressing description. The plain was covered with the corpses of the slain; the march of Macdonald's column especially might be traced by the train of dead bodies which lay along its course. Such was the multitude of the wounded, that they far exceeded all the efforts of the French surgeons, and of the humane citizens of Vienna, for their relief; and four days after the battle, mutilated human beings, still alive, were found in great numbers among the rich fields of wheat with which the plain was covered. Some of these unhappy wretches endured for days together the rays of a vertical sun during the dog-days, without either food or water: mutilated, and unable to remove the flies which fastened on their wounds, they literally became, while still alive, the prey of the insects which hover round carcasses of animals in hot weather. The glancing of the arms, the pride of military display, was no more: soiled with dust, stained with blood, helmets and cuirasses, late so brilliant, lay piled on each other in sad and neglected confusion.* The Emperor frequently dismounted, and with his own hands admin-

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58.
Napoleon
visits the
field of
battle.

noon on the 5th, he would, at the same rate, have been on his ground at four A. M. on the 6th, in time to have co-operated with Rosenberg in the attack on the French right, retained Napoleon and his Guards in that quarter to make head against such formidable assailants, and altogether prevented the countermarch of those veterans from right to left, which repaired the disaster of Massena and Bernadotte in the centre, and arrested the victorious advance of Kollowrath and Klenau on the right. But for the failure of the Archduke John to come up in time, therefore, the battle was irrevocably lost to Napoleon.—See PELET, iv. 162, 238.

* “ L’arme che già sì liete in vista foro,
Faceano or mostra spaventosa e mesta.
Perduti ha i lampi il ferro, i raggi l’oro:
Nulla vaghezza ai bei color più resta.
Quanto apparia d’adorno e di decoro
Ne’ cimieri e ne’ fregi, or si calpesta.
La polve ingombra ciò ch’ al sangue avanza.
Tanto i campi mutata avean sembianza !”

Tasso, *Gerus. Liber.* xx. 52.

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¹ Pel. iv.
241. Sav.
iv. 119.
D'Abr. xii.
261, 262.

istered relief to some of the wounded, and drew tears of gratitude from eyes about to be closed in death.* The knowledge that the victory was their own had restored all their wonted enthusiasm to the French soldiers; the wounded exclaimed *Vive l'Empereur!* as he passed, and hoisted little white flags, formed by putting their handkerchiefs or an arm of their shirts on their bayonets, as well to testify their joy as to implore relief.¹

59.
And makes
Macdonald
a marshal.

After having traversed the field of battle, Napoleon inspected the soldiers who were about to march in pursuit of the enemy, and distributed rewards in great profusion among the most deserving. In passing, he stopped and held out his hand to Macdonald: "Shake hands, Macdonald, without any farther grudge: † from this day we shall be friends; and I will send you, as a pledge of my sincerity, your marshal's staff, which you won so gloriously yesterday." "Ah, sire," replied Macdonald with tears in his eyes, "we are now together for life and death." And well did the hero of Scottish blood redeem his word! Through every future change of the Emperor's reign, he adhered with unshaken fidelity to the fortunes of his master. He was to be found by his side, alike amidst the disasters of Fontainebleau as the triumph of Wagram; and, when all the other objects of his bounty had deserted their benefactor, and passed over to the enemy, he remained almost alone to support him; ² the latest object

² Sav. iv.
119, 120.
Pelet, iv.
241, 242.

* "The Emperor stopped his horse beside a young officer of carabineers, who had had his skull fractured by a cannon-shot; he knelt beside him, felt his pulse, and wiped with his own handkerchief the dust from his lips and brow. A little spirits made him revive. He opened his eyes and fixed them on the Emperor; he recognised him, and his eyes filled with tears; but he was too weak to be able to sob, and soon after breathed his last."—SAVARY, iv. 119.

† A coldness had long subsisted between Napoleon and this distinguished general. He had not been employed in any considerable command since the battle of the Trebbia, in 1799. Jealousy and malevolence had widened the breach occasioned by Macdonald's original disinclination to join the herd of obsequious flatterers at the Tuileries. How often does difficulty and misfortune bring to the post they are really worthy to fill, those noble minds who disdain the arts by which in easier times favour is generally won! — SAVARY, iv. 119.

of his prosperous favour, but the most faithful follower of his adverse fortunes.

Oudinot, a general, as the bulletin said, "tried in a hundred battles," and Marmont, whose campaign in Illyria and Carniola had so powerfully contributed to the success of the Grand Army, were at the same time elevated to the rank of marshals. Very different was the destiny which awaited Bernadotte, Prince of Pontecorvo, hitherto one of the most favoured of Napoleon's lieutenants. This chief, who had been singularly unfortunate both in his attack on the heights of Wagram and village of Aderklaa, on the evening of the 5th, and his encounter with the Austrian centre on the morning of the 6th, had with the true spirit of Gascony, his native country, glossed over his defeat by a boasting proclamation to the Saxons on the 7th, in which he professed to convey to them the Emperor's approbation for the gallantry which they had evinced on these occasions.* Napoleon, who was both irritated at Bernadotte and the Saxons for the abandonment of Aderklaa, which it cost him so much time and bloodshed to regain on the following day, and jealous of any of his lieutenants assuming his own peculiar function in the distribution of praise or blame, immediately prepared and circulated, but among the marshals and ministers alone, an order of the day, reflecting in very severe terms, both on the conduct of the Saxons and upon this step on the part of their chief;¹ and soon after

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60.

Appoint-
ment of
Oudinot
and Mar-
mont mar-
shals of
the empire.
Disgrace of
Bernadotte.

July 9.
July 30.
1 Bour. viii.
280. Pel. iv.
241. Sav. iv.
123.

* Bernadotte's proclamation to the Saxons was in these terms:—"Saxons! in the day of the 5th July, seven or eight thousand of you pierced the centre of the enemy's army, and reached Deutsch Wagram, despite all the efforts of forty thousand of the enemy, supported by sixty pieces of cannon; you continued the combat till midnight, and bivouacked in the middle of the Austrian lines. At daybreak on the 6th, you renewed the combat with the same perseverance, and in the midst of the ravages of the enemy's artillery, your living columns have remained immovable like brass. The great Napoleon was a witness to your devotion; he has enrolled you among his bravest followers. Saxons! the fortune of a soldier consists in the performance of his duties; you have worthily performed yours."—Bivouac of Leopoldstadt, 7th July 1809. This order of the day was inserted in all the German papers at the time.—Bour. viii. 280.

† Napoleon's order of the day was couched in the following terms:—"Inde-

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a decree was published in the bulletin dissolving that corps, and incorporating its soldiers with other parts of the army.

61.

Who is appointed to the command of Antwerp, and again disgraced. July 30.

Bernadotte sought a private interview with the Emperor on this painful subject, but in vain; he constantly refused to see him; and the disgraced marshal immediately set out for Paris, where he was soon after employed by the minister at war, without the concurrence of Napoleon, in a very important duty, that of commanding at Antwerp during the English invasion of the Scheldt. No sooner, however, did the Emperor learn of this fresh appointment by the government at Paris, than it, too, was cancelled, and Bessières put there in his stead; even although Bernadotte's efforts, during the short period he held the command, had been eminently serviceable to the empire. These repeated indignities made a deep impression on the mind of the French marshal; they revived that ancient jealousy at the First Consul * which all the subsequent

pendent of the consideration that his Majesty commands the army in person, and that to him it belongs to distribute the measure of praise or blame to every one, on this particular occasion, success was owing to the French and not to any foreign troops. The order of the day of the Prince of Pontecorvo, tending to inspire false pretensions in troops of the most ordinary description, is contrary to truth, to policy, to the national honour. The success of the 5th is due to the Marshals the Dukes of Rivoli and Oudinot, who pierced the centre of the enemy at the same time that the corps of the Duke of Auerstadt turned their flank. The village of Deutsch Wagram was not taken on the evening of the 5th; it was so only on the morning of the 6th, at six o'clock, by the corps of Marshal Oudinot. The corps of the Prince of Pontecorvo did not remain 'immovable as brass;' on the contrary, it was the first to beat a retreat. His Majesty was obliged to cover the corps of the Viceroy by the divisions Broussier and Lamarque commanded by Marshal Macdonald, by the division of heavy cavalry commanded by General Nansouty, and a part of the cavalry of the Guard. It is to that Marshal and his troops that the eulogium is really due, which the Prince of Pontecorvo has attributed to himself. His Majesty desires that this testimony of his displeasure may serve as an example to deter any marshal from arrogating to himself the glory which belongs to another. His Majesty has, nevertheless, desired that this order of the day, which would doubtless distress the Saxon army, though its soldiers know well that they do not merit the eulogiums which have been bestowed on them, shall remain secret, and only be sent to the marshals commanding the *corps d'armée*.—NAPOLEON." — See BOURRIENNE, viii. 281, 289, who seems to admit that the leading facts stated in the severe order of the day by the Emperor are well-founded.

* *Ante*, Chap. XXIX. § 31.

glories of his reign had not entirely extinguished ; induced a sullen discontent with the imperial service, which experience had shown was liable to such inconstancy ; made him grasp eagerly at the Swedish throne, which fortune soon after proffered to his acceptance ; and, by investing the disgraced soldier with the power and feelings of an independent sovereign, contributed in the end, in no inconsiderable degree, to the downfall of the French empire.¹

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¹ Bour. viii.
280, 281.
Pel. iv. 241,
242, Sav.
iv. 123.

Two lines of retreat were open to the Archduke after he had determined to relinquish the field—that to Olmutz and Moravia, and that to Bohemia ; and so little did the French press their adversaries when the retreat commenced, that the Emperor was for some time ignorant which of the two routes they had adopted. There were several reasons, however, which induced the Austrian general to prefer the latter. Prague was, next to Vienna, the greatest military establishment, and contained the largest arsenal of the empire ; and it stood in a country surrounded with a range of hills which offered favourable positions for retarding the advance of an invading army. Hopes were not wanting, also, that the great naval and military armament which England had so long been preparing, would soon make its appearance either in Flanders or the north of Germany, and that the indecision of Prussia, notwithstanding the retreat from Wagram, might be determined by such powerful support in the north of Germany. For these reasons, the line of Bohemia was selected for the retreat of the Grand Army ; leaving to the Archduke John, with the forces under his command, and the Hungarian insurrection, the care of covering Hungary and the eastern provinces of the empire.²

62.
The Austrians retire towards Bohemia. July 7.

Atlas,
Plate 11.

² Pel. iv.
253, 255.
Jom. iii.
279, 280.
Stat. 329,
336.

The greater part of the army followed the high-road to Znaym : Rosenberg alone, on the extreme left, took that to Brunn by Wolkersdorf. The retreat continued all the 7th without any serious molestation from the enemy ; while Napoleon, who was disquieted by the presence of so large a body as the Archduke John's army, still untouched,

63.
And take the road to Znaym.

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on his right flank, and by the menacing advance of Giulay with twenty-five thousand men from the side of Styria towards Vienna, separated the immense army which had so lately been concentrated on the field of Wagram : Davoust, Marmont, Massena, with Oudinot, Bessières, and the Guards, being directed to follow on the traces of the Archduke Charles ; the Viceroy's corps, augmented to fifty thousand men by the addition of the Saxons and Würtembergers, being moved towards Presburg, to observe the Archduke John ; while Macdonald's division remained in charge of the bridges of Vienna, and was prepared, with the garrison of the capital, to repel any insult that might be offered by the Ban of Croatia. No less circumspect than adventurous, Napoleon at the same time ordered a hundred pieces of heavy cannon to be mounted on the ramparts of Vienna, augmented its garrison to six thousand men, laid in provisions for six months, directed the formation of great new fortifications on the *têtes-de-pont* of the capital, especially at Florisdorf, where the road to Brunn and Znaym traversed the Danube, and ordered Passau, Lintz, Raab, Molk, and Gottweig, in different directions round the capital, to be put in a state of defence.¹

¹ Pelet, iv. 253, 257. Jom. iii. 279, 280. Napoleon's Orders, 9th July 1809. Pelet, iv. 408.

64.
Retreat of the Archduke to Znaym, and his position there.

No considerable action took place during the retreat. Massena, however, pressed the retiring host with all his wonted activity, and bloody encounters of inconsiderable bodies marked the track of the armies. The Archduke conducted the retreat with consummate skill, and in the most admirable order : always protecting the rearguard, composed of formidable masses of cavalry and infantry, by a numerous artillery skilfully posted on the rising grounds with which that undulating country abounded. To accelerate his movements, and if possible throw him in some degree into confusion, Napoleon moved Marmont's corps, which was following Rosenberg on the road to Brünn, by a cross-road to Laa, by which means he threatened to arrive at Znaym before the main Austrian

army. The Archduke no sooner received intelligence of this movement, than he fell back with all his forces, and took post at that town, on the banks of the Thaya. Nothing can surpass the military position which the environs of Znaym afford. The town itself, surrounded by walls, rests, towards the west, on the rugged precipices which border the river ; towards the east, on the slopes of the Lischen, the ground descends on all sides to the point of Schallersdorf, where the river turns sharp by a right angle, and flows towards Lipwitz, and the junction of the Lischen and Thaya. These two streams thus enclose, as it were, a vast bastion, with a great natural wet ditch in front, about a mile long, and equally broad. The Archduke himself took post at Brenditz, which rendered him master of the roads to both Budwitz and Bohemia, and to Brünn ; but the slopes of Znaym were filled with troops, the bridge of the Thaya was barricaded, and four powerful batteries were erected on the heights above to dispute the passage.¹

Strong as this position was, it was doubtful whether the Austrians would maintain themselves in it. The advanced guards of Massena, indeed, when they first approached the bridge of the Thaya, were arrested by the tremendous fire of grape and musketry which issued from the woods and heights on the opposite side. But the French cannon were soon placed in such a position as to rake the Austrian batteries ; the bridge was disengaged by their flanking fire ; fords were discovered both above and below ; and soon the attacking columns were passed over, and began to ascend the slopes on the opposite side. The Archduke withdrew his troops into Znaym ; and arranged his artillery in such numbers around its walls, that, when the French leading columns arrived within reach of the fire, on the slope leading to the town, they were checked by the terrible discharge, and obliged to retire precipitately with severe loss. Upon this the Austrians issued forth, and took post round the town and in front of the bridge, in great strength, in a position admirable for

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July 9.

July 10.

¹ Pelet, iv.
264, 267.
Jom. iv.
282. Vict.
et Conq.
xix. 216,
217.

65.

Combat at
Znaym.
July 11.

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defence, though cramped for manœuvring, and especially hazardous if a retreat was intended. A dreadful storm arose at noon, which darkened the air, and deluged both armies with such a torrent of rain, that for two hours the discharge of firearms was impossible, and the combat of necessity was suspended. When the atmosphere cleared, Massena renewed his attacks on the grenadiers in front of the bridge ; but he was driven back, and the Austrians, pursuing the flying enemy, regained that important passage, and made prisoners a battalion with three generals in the village at its opposite extremity. Massena, upon this, brought up the 10th regiment, which again won the village, forced the bridge, and being followed by a brigade of cuirassiers, who charged with uncommon resolution, drove back the enemy's column to their position in front of Znaym, with the loss of five hundred prisoners. Meanwhile the French guns were brought up on the left, in great numbers, to Edlepitz, from whence they took in flank the most formidable batteries of the Austrians.¹

¹ Pelet, iv.
269, 273.
Jom. iii.
282. Dum.
Souv. ii.
378, 379.

66.

Advance of
Marmont,
and conclu-
sion of the
armistice of
Znaym.

The progress of the Austrians in front of Znaym did not escape the observation of Napoleon, who had arrived during the storm at Theswitz, and established himself at the headquarters of Marmont's corps. To relieve the pressure on Massena, who was obviously engaged with superior forces, and whose defeat would endanger the whole army, he immediately ordered the former marshal to debouch from Theswitz, to cross the Lischen, and to ascend on the north-eastern side the plateau of Znaym. These orders were quickly obeyed, and Marmont crossed the stream and ascended the hill, but was exposed to a very heavy fire when he approached the town of Znaym, and came within reach of the formidable Austrian batteries arranged round its walls. Matters were thus in a very critical state ; for the two corps of Massena and Marmont were alone engaged with the whole Austrian army except Rosenberg's corps ; and Davoust and Oudinot, destined to support them, could not arrive at the theatre of action

till the following morning. Nevertheless Massena, with his usual impetuosity, was urging the attack on the town, and already the rattle of musketry was heard in the suburbs, when the cry was heard, "Peace! Peace!—cease firing." Such, however, was the exasperation of the contending parties, that it was with great difficulty the action could be stopped; and when the officers arrived from the headquarters of the two armies to announce the armistice, they were wounded before the troops could be prevailed on to desist from mutual slaughter.¹

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¹ Pel. iv.
272, 274.
Thib. vi.
350. Sav. iv.
124, 125.

In effect, the Archduke Charles had, on the preceding night, sent Prince John of Lichtenstein to the Emperor's headquarters to propose an armistice; but Napoleon was unwilling to accept it, till he had enjoyed an opportunity of observing in person the situation of the armies. The motives which led the Austrian cabinet to take this step were sufficiently obvious. The policy of that government always has been to avoid pushing matters to an extremity: to come to an accommodation before the chances of war have become desperate; to consider the preservation of the army the grand object, and trust, by maintaining it entire, to regain at some future time the advantages which may be lost at the moment by yielding to the storm. Considering another battle, therefore, as endangering the existence of the empire, and the result of the former not so decisive as to induce the enemy to refuse reasonable terms of accommodation, they deemed it the more prudent course to propose an armistice while yet the forces of the monarchy were entire, the more especially as the retreat from Wagram was not likely to induce Prussia to adopt a decisive course, and the long-promised armament of Great Britain had not yet left the harbours of the Channel.²

67.
Motives
which led
the Aus-
trians to
this armis-
tice.

² Pel. iv.
274, 278.
Stat. 388,
390. Jom.
iii. 283.

It was not, however, till Napoleon had himself seen the positions of the contending armies, and was satisfied that the Austrians, at the moment, had the advantage, as well in the position as in the concentration of their troops, that

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68.

Arguments
against the
armistice at
the French
headquar-
ters.

he resolved to accede to the suspension of arms.* A council of war was afterwards held, attended by all the marshals, in the Emperor's tent, in which the important point was debated, whether the armistice should be agreed to. Opinions were much divided, and the discussion was prolonged till a very late hour. On the one side, it was contended by Berthier and the advocates for a continuance of hostilities, that it was of the last importance to take advantage of the reinforcements which had already come up, or were likely to arrive during the night, to commence a general attack on the enemy, and finish the war on the following day at a blow; that the Archduke's position around Znaim, though strong, was not impregnable; that Austria was the irreconcilable enemy of France under the new regime; and that, unless deprived of the power of again injuring her, she would never cease to violate the most solemn treaties, when it suited her own convenience, or there was a prospect of advantage from even the most flagrant violation of the public faith; that if, by retiring in the night, as present appearances rendered probable, the Archduke should succeed in regaining Bohemia, and uniting to his standards the forces of that province, the Emperor could summon to his aid the corps of Lefebvre, Junot, and Jerome, and the advantage would still remain on his side: that it was indispensable to put an end to these coalitions perpetually springing up, by overpowering Austria, which was the centre of them all; that this was a point of much more importance than finishing the war in Spain; and that no sooner would the Emperor, for that purpose, enter the Peninsula, than a new coalition would spring up in his rear, which would embrace all the northern powers.¹

¹ Thib. vii.
350. Bign.
viii. 310.

On the other hand, it was contended by the advocates of peace, that if Prince Charles retreated, as he unques-

* "Oudinot, and the reserve from Wolkersdorf, could not come up till the following morning; it was material not to allow the enemy to perceive his superiority at that moment."—THIBAUDEAU, vii. 350.

tionably might do, during the night, and gained the Bohemian mountains, there was every reason to fear a general conflagration in Germany; an open declaration from Prussia, and probably the ultimate adhesion of Russia itself; that it was evident from present appearances, not less than past events, that the real danger of France lay in the north; that an entirely new system of Russian policy had been brought to light in the course of the contest; and that, in anticipation of the grand and final conflict between the south and the north, which was evidently approaching, it was of the last importance not merely to spare but to conciliate Austria, and, by terminating the war in the Peninsula, not only secure the rear of France, but liberate two hundred thousand of its best soldiers from an inglorious but murderous warfare. The Emperor, after hearing, according to his usual custom, both sides patiently, more fully aware than many of his generals of the precarious footing on which he stood with Russia, inclined to the latter side, and broke up the conference with the decisive words—"Enough of blood has been shed: I accept the armistice."¹

No great difficulty was experienced in fixing the line of demarcation between the districts to be occupied by the two armies; their relative position, and the principle *uti possidetis*, afforded too clear a rule for drawing the line between them. The French were permitted to retain possession of all Upper Austria, as far as the borders of Bohemia, including the circles of Znaym and Brünn; the whole district embraced by the course of the Morava as far as its confluence with the Thaya; thence by the high-road to Presburg, including that town; the course of the Danube as far as Raab, the river of that name, and thence by the frontiers of Styria and Carniola to Fiume. On this principle, the citadels of Gratz and Brünn, the fort of Sasenberg, the whole districts of the Tyrol and Vorarlberg, were to be surrendered to their arms.² It was a third in point of extent, and more than a half in point of military

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69.

And for
peace; which
Napoleon
adopts.¹ Pel. iv.
275, 277.
Bign. viii.
310. Thib.
vii. 350.70.
Limits as-
signed to
the two
armies by
the armis-
tice.
July 12.² See armis-
tice, Mar-
ten's Sup.
v. 209.
Moniteur,
July 20.

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strength, of the whole empire. The armies in Poland were to retain their respective positions; in western and northern Germany, the limits between the two powers were to be those of the states composing the Confederation of the Rhine.

71.
Hesitation
of the Em-
peror of
Austria to
sign the
armistice,
which is
only done
on the 18th.
Heavy con-
tribution
levied on
Austria.

The armistice was concluded by the Archduke Charles alone, in virtue of the powers reposed in him as generalissimo, but subject to the ratification of the Emperor. The cabinet of Vienna, which at that period was assembled at Komorn in Hungary, had considerable difficulty in giving their consent to it. It was proposed to take advantage of the distance of the French troops to act on the right bank of the Danube; to unite the forces of Giulay and the Archduke John with those of the Hungarian insurrection, and move towards Styria and the Tyrol, so as to threaten the French communications; while the Archduke Charles, by retreating towards Bohemia, drew the bulk of their forces to a distance from their only base of operations. In pursuance of these views, which for a few days prevailed at the Imperial headquarters, directions were sent to the Archduke John to "disregard any orders regarding an armistice which did not bear the sign-manual of the Emperor, and to take his instructions from him alone." In the course of the two following days, however, Prince Lichtenstein arrived from the headquarters of the Archduke Charles, and inspired more moderate views. The court, yielding to necessity, and desirous of gaining time to recruit its armies, await the progress of events in Spain and the effect of the long-expected English armament in the north of Germany, gave a reluctant consent; the armistice was signed by the Emperor on the 18th, and the flames of war were quenched in Germany, till they broke out with awful violence three years afterwards on the banks of the Niemen. The Austrian people were not long in receiving a bitter proof of the reality of their subjugation.¹ On the very day after the armistice was concluded, a decree of

July 14.

¹ Pel. iv.
283, 284,
Sav. iv.
126. Jom.
iii. 285.
Decree,
July 13.
Montg. vii.
430.

Napoleon's imposed a war contribution of 237,800,000 francs (£9,500,000) on the provinces occupied by the French armies, which were not a half of the monarchy ; a burden at least as great, considering the relative wealth and value of money in the two countries, as an imposition of fifty millions sterling would be on Great Britain.

The battle of Wagram bears a striking resemblance to two of the most memorable that have occurred in ancient or modern times—those of Cannæ and Waterloo. In all the three, the one party made a grand effort at the centre of his antagonist, and the final issue of each battle was owing to the success or failure of the measures adopted to defeat this central attack, by a united movement against the wings of the enemy. At Cannæ, as already noticed, it was the pushing forward of the Roman centre, in column, into the middle of the Carthaginian army, followed by the turning of both their flanks by the Numidian cavalry, which brought about their ruin. At Aspern, the defeat of the French on the second day was owing to a similar hazardous advance of the French centre in close column into the middle of the Austrian line, which skilfully receded, and brought the French columns into the centre of a converging fire of a prodigious artillery.* At Waterloo, the final defeat of the French was owing to the steadiness of the English Guards, which in line arrested the advance of the Imperial Guard in column ; while the concentric fire of the British batteries, advanced in the close of the day into a kind of semicircle, and the simultaneous charge of a brigade of cavalry on the one side of the attacking mass, and a line of infantry on the other, completed the final destruction of that formidable body. At Wagram the Archduke had, on a still more extended scale, prepared the means of repelling the anticipated central attack of the French in column, and converting it into the cause of total ruin. The batteries and troops in the centre

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72.
Comparison
of the battle
of Wagram
with those
of Cannæ
and Water-
loo.

* *Ante*, Chap. LVII. § 66.

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were so disposed, that their awful fire at length arrested Macdonald's intrepid column ; Aspern and Essling were captured on one flank ; the Archduke John, with thirty thousand fresh troops, was destined to turn the other. To all appearance, the greatest defeat recorded in history awaited the French Emperor ; when the tardiness of that prince, and perhaps the want of determined resolution on the part of the Archduke Charles, proved as fatal to the house of Hapsburg as the orders to Grouchy to march on Wavres, instead of the field of battle with Wellington, was to Napoleon himself at Waterloo, and victory was snatched from the grasp of the Austrian eagles when they seemed on the very point of seizing it.

73.
Reflections
on the cam-
paign, and
its glorious
character to
Austria.

The campaign of Aspern and Wagram is the most glorious in the Austrian annals ; one of the most memorable examples of patriotic resistance recorded in the history of the world. When we recollect that in the short space of three months were comprised the desperate contest in Bavaria, the victory of Aspern, the war in the Tyrol, the doubtful fight of Wagram, we are at a loss whether to admire most the vital strength of a monarchy which, so soon after the disasters of Ulm and Austerlitz, was capable of such gigantic efforts—the noble spirit which prompted its people so unanimously to make such unheard-of exertions—or the firm resolution of its chiefs, who, undismayed by reverses which would have crushed any other government to dust, maintained an undaunted front to the very last. We admire the courage of Darius, who, after the loss of half his provinces, still fought with heroic resolution against the Macedonian conqueror on the field of Arbela ; we exult in the firmness of the Roman senate, which, yet bleeding with the slaughter of Cannæ, sent forth legions to Spain, and sold the ground on which Hannibal was encamped, when his standards crowded round the walls of the city ; and we anticipate already the voice of ages in awarding the praise of unconquerable resolution to the Russian

nation, which, undeterred by the carnage of Borodino, burned the ancient capital of the empire rather than permit it to become the resting-place of its enemies, and, when pierced to the heart, still stretched forth its mighty arms from Finland to the Danube to envelop and crush the invader. But, without underrating these glorious examples of patriotic resistance, it may safely be affirmed that none of them will bear a comparison with that exhibited by Austria in this memorable campaign.

Other empires have almost invariably succumbed upon the capture of the capital. Carthage was crushed by the storm of its metropolis by Scipio Africanus ; Rome sank at once with the fall of the Eternal City before the Gothic trumpet ; with the conquest of Constantinople the lower empire perished ; the seizure of Berlin by the Allies, in the days of the Great Frederick, was but a transient incursion—its lasting occupation by Napoleon proved fatal to the strength of the monarchy ; France, during its republican fervour, was nearly overthrown by the charge of fifteen hundred Prussian hussars on the plains of Champagne,* and twice saw its strength totally paralysed by the fall of its capital in 1814 and 1815 ; Russia survived the capture of Moscow only by the aid of a rigorous climate and the overwhelming force of its Scythian cavalry. Austria is the only state recorded in history which, without any such advantages, fought TWO desperate battles in defence of its independence AFTER its capital had fallen ! To this glorious and unique distinction the Imperial annals may justly lay claim ; and those who affect to condemn its institutions, and despise its national character, would do well to examine the annals of the world for a similar instance of patriotic resolution, and search their own hearts for the feelings and the devotion requisite for its repetition.†

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74.
Other em-
pires have
all sunk
with the
fall of the
capital.

* *Ante*, Chap. x. § 23.

† A third instance of similar unconquerable resolution was exhibited by this noble people in the course of the desperate revolutionary struggle in

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75.

Proof thereby
afforded of the
practical bless-
ings of the
Austrian
government.

In truth, the invincible tenacity with which both the Austrian nobility and people maintained the conflict, under circumstances of adversity which, in every other instance recorded in history, had subdued the minds of men, affords at once a decisive refutation of the opinion so industriously propagated and heedlessly received in this country, as to the despotic and oppressive nature of the Imperial rule, and the most memorable example of the capability of an aristocratic form of government to impart to the community under its direction a degree of consistency and resolution of which mankind under no other circumstances are capable. It was not general misery which caused the Tyrolese to start unanimously to arms at the call of the Austrian trumpet, and combat the invader with stone balls discharged from larch-trees bored into the form of cannon : it was not oppressive rule which called forth the sublime devotion of Aspern and Wagram. No people ever were so often defeated as the Austrians were during the course of the Revolutionary war ; but none rose with such vigour from the ground, or exhibited in such vivid colours the power of moral principle to withstand the shocks of fortune ; to compensate, by firmness of purpose, the superior intellectual acquisitions of other states ; and communicate to men that unconquerable resolution which brings them in the end victorious through the severest earthly trials.

76.
Great degree
of material
prosperity
in Austria
Proper.

The aspect of Austria Proper, especially in its mountainous regions, confirms and explains this extraordinary phenomenon. In no other country, perhaps, is so uncommon a degree of wellbeing to be seen among the peasantry ; nowhere are the fruits of the earth divided in apparently such equitable proportions between the landlord and the cultivator ; nowhere does ease and contentment prevail so universally in the dwellings of the

1848, when Vienna was regained from the arms of the rebels by the heroism of Jellachich and Windischgratz. Another instance, among the many which history exhibits, of the indelible stamp of national character.

poor.¹ When it is recollected that this general prosperity prevails in a country where the taxation is so light as to be almost imperceptible by the great body of the people, and where the proportion of persons instructed is, on an average of the whole empire, equal to that in any state of similar dimensions in Europe, and as high in some provinces as the best educated nations of the world,* it must be admitted that the philanthropist has much cause to linger with satisfaction on its contemplation. It is on a different class, on the middle class and the aspiring children of the burghers, that the restrictions of the Imperial sway are hereafter destined to hang heavy ; but at this period no heartburnings arose from the exclusions to which they were subject, and one only passion, that of ardent devotion to their country, animated all classes of the people.

But the example of Austria in 1809 has afforded another and still more interesting lesson to mankind. That country had at that period no pretensions to intellectual superiority. Commerce, manufactures, and the mechanical arts had made little progress over its surface ; literature was in its infancy ; science flourished only in a few favoured spots, under the fostering care of Imperial patronage ; poetry, history, philosophy were to the great mass of the inhabitants almost unknown. It had long and painfully felt the consequences of this inferiority in the bloody contests it had been compelled to maintain with the democratic energy and scientific ability of the French Revolution. How, then, did it happen that a state, so little qualified by intellectual superiority to contend with the gigantic powers of wickedness, should have stood forth with such unparal-

CHAP.
LIX.

1809.

¹ Personal
observation.

77.

Causes of
the extra-
ordinary
public virtue
thus exhib-
ited in
Austria.

* One in fifteen of the population over the whole empire attend the elementary schools ; in some provinces, as Upper Austria, the Tyrol, and Bohemia, the proportion is as high as 1 in 11. In Switzerland, it is now 1 in 10 ; in Ireland, 1 in 9 : in Scotland, 1 in 11 ; in France, 1 in 17 ; in Prussia, 1 in 10 ; in Spain, 1 in 350 ; in Poland, 1 in 100 ; in Russia, 1 in 794.—See MOREAU, *Stat. de la Grande Brétagne*, ii. 333, 334.

CHAP.

LIX.

1809.

leled lustre in the contest ; should have resisted alone, with such heroic bravery, the military force of half of Europe, guided by consummate ability and trained by unparalleled conquests ; and, for the first time since the commencement of the struggle, made the scales hang even between the conservative and revolutionary principles ? Simply because she possessed a pure, virtuous, and single-minded people ; because, whatever the corruptions of the capital may have been, the heart of the nation was untainted ; because an indulgent rule had attached the nobility to their sovereign, and experienced benefits the peasantry to their landlords ; because patriotism was there established upon its only durable basis, a sense of moral obligation and the force of religious duty.

78.
Remarkable
contrast
afterwards
exhibited by
France.

And in this respect France, in the time of her adversity, exhibited a memorable contrast to Austria in the hour of her national trial. When the evil days fell upon her, when the barrier of the Rhine was forced, and hostile standards approached the gates of Paris, the boasted virtues of republicanism disappeared ; the brilliant energy of military courage was found unequal to the shock. Province after province sank without performing one deed worthy of remembrance ; city after city surrendered without leaving one trace on the page of history. No French Saragossa proved that patriotism can supply the want of ramparts ; no revolutionary la Vendée, that the civic virtues can dispense with Christian enthusiasm ; no second Tyrol, that even imperial strength could fail against the “might that slumbers in a peasant’s arm.” The strength of the empire was in the army alone : with the fall of its capital the power of the Revolution was at an end : the marshals and generals, true to the real idol of worldly adoration, ranged themselves on the side of success.* The conqueror of a hundred fights

* “The galleries and saloons,” says Caulaincourt, “which adjoined the apartment of the Emperor at Fontainebleau (in April 1814) were deserted.

was left almost alone by the creatures of his bounty ; and, as with the sorcerers who crowded round the statue of Eblis, when the idol was pierced to the heart by the son of Hodeirah, “the ocean-vault fell in, and all were crushed.”

These considerations, in a certain degree, lift up the veil which conceals from mortal eyes the ultimate designs of Providence in the wars which so often desolate the world. If we compare Austria as she was in 1793 with Austria in 1809, we seem not merely to be dealing with a different people, but with a different age of the world. In the first era is to be seen nothing but selfishness and vacillation in the national councils, lukewarmness and indifference in the public feeling, irresolution and disgrace in military events. But it is well for nations not less than individuals to be in affliction. Turn to the same nation in 1809, and behold her undaunted in the cabinet, unconquered in the field ; glowing in every quarter with patriotism, teeming in every direction with energy ; firm in her faith, generous in her resolutions ; maintaining unshaken constancy to her principles amidst unheard-of disasters, fidelity to her sovereign amidst unbounded

CHAP.
LIX.

1809.

79.
Elevation
of the
Austrian
character
from past
calamities.

The marshals had carried with them their brilliant staffs ; the wind of adversity had blown, and the glittering crowd had vanished. That solitude thrilled the heart. The redoubted chief who so lately had never moved except surrounded by a magnificent cortège, the great monarch who had seen kings at his feet, is now only a simple individual, disinherited even of the interest and care of his friends ! All was desolate, all was solitary in that splendid palace. I felt the necessity of withdrawing the Emperor from so fearful a torture. ‘Have you got everything ready for my departure !’—‘Yes, Sire ?’ ‘My poor Caulaincourt, you discharge here the functions of grand-marshal. Could you have conceived it ? Berthier has gone off without even bidding me adieu !’—‘What, Sire !’ exclaimed I—‘Berthier also, the creature of your bounty !’ ‘Berthier,’ replied the Emperor, ‘was born a courtier : you will soon see my vice-constable a mendicant for employment from the Bourbons. I feel humiliated, that the men whom I have raised so high in the eyes of Europe should have sunk so low ! What have they made of that atmosphere of glory in which they appeared enveloped in the eyes of the stranger ? What must the sovereigns think of all these men made illustrious by my reign ?’ Such was the fidelity and gratitude of the Revolution ; its genius, its intellect, its glory ! Contrast this with Austria after Aspern — with the devotion of Wagram, and the heroism of the Tyrol.—See CAULAINCOURT’S *Memoirs*, ii. 109, 111.

CHAP.
LIX.

1809.

80.
Glorious
position
Austria
now occu-
pied.

temptations. This is indeed regeneration, this is true national glory, purchased in the only school of real improvement, the paths of suffering.

How many centuries of national existence did Austria go through before this mighty change was effected ; how many national sins did she expiate ; what a gleam of glory, not merely in imperial but in human annals has she left ! She is to reappear in the contest for European freedom ; but she is to reappear as a conqueror, invested with irresistible strength, arrayed in impenetrable panoply. She shared the glories of Leipsic with Russia and Prussia ; but the heroism of Aspern, the constancy of Wagram, are her own. Mankind have little concern with the mere conquest of one nation by another : it is the triumph of virtue over misfortune, of duty over selfishness, of religion over infidelity, which is the real patrimony of the human race. The heroic constancy, the generous fidelity of all classes in Austria at the close of the contest, was placed by Providence in bright contrast to the treachery and selfishness of the French Revolutionists, as if to demonstrate the inability of the greatest intellectual acquisitions to communicate that elevation to the character which springs from the prevalence of moral feeling, and to show that even the conquerors of the world were unequal to a crisis which religion had rendered of easy endurance to the shepherds of the Alps.

CHAPTER LX.

WALCHEREN EXPEDITION—PEACE OF VIENNA—SECOND WAR
IN THE TYROL—DETHRONEMENT OF THE POPE.

NATURE has formed the Scheldt to be the rival of the Thames. Of equal magnitude and depth with its renowned competitor, flowing through a country excelling even the midland counties of England in wealth and resources, adjoining cities long superior to any in Europe in arts and commerce: the artery at once of Flanders and Holland, of Brabant and Luxemburg, it is fitted to be the great medium of communication between the fertile fields and rich manufacturing towns of the Low Countries and the other maritime states of the world. If it is not equally celebrated as the Thames in history or romance; if all the vessels of the ocean do not crowd its quays, and its merchants are not sought by the princes of the earth; if it does not give law to all the quarters of the globe, and boast a colonial empire on which the sun never sets, it is not because Nature has denied it the physical advantages conducive to such exalted destinies, but because the jealousies and perverseness of man have in great part marred her choicest gifts. Flanders was a great and highly civilised manufacturing state, when England was still struggling between the coarse plenty of Anglo-Saxon rudeness and the insulting oppression of Norman chivalry; even in the days of Edward III. and the Black Prince, the Brewer of Ghent was the esteemed ally of princes,

CHAP.
LX.

1809.
1.

Vast capabilities of the Scheldt for commerce.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

2.
Former
grandeur
and present
importance
of Antwerp.

and the political passions of our times had been warmed into being by the long-established prosperity of a commercial community. Their territory was the richest, the best peopled, the most adorned by cities in Christendom; and the fine arts, arising in the wane of ancient opulence, could already boast the immortal works of Teniers, Rubens, and Vandyke, when the school of England had as yet hardly emerged from the obscurity of infant years.

ANTWERP, the key of this great estuary, gradually rose with the increasing commerce of the Low Countries, until, at the period of the Reformation, it numbered two hundred thousand inhabitants within its walls, and engrossed the whole trade of these beautiful provinces. Its noble harbour, capable of containing a thousand vessels; its extensive ramparts and citadel, among the strongest in Europe; its splendid cathedral, exceeding even St Paul's in elevation;* its magnificent quays, bordering a river five hundred yards in breadth, which a seventy-four gun ship might navigate with safety—all conspire to render this city one of the most renowned in Europe. If the seventeen provinces had remained united under one government, and the Scheldt had continued to be the artery of communication between their admirable territory, their noble cities, and the rest of the world, it must, by this time, have been one of the greatest emporiums in existence, and possibly would have borne away the palm from London itself in wealth and grandeur. But religious persecution first rent asunder that beautiful dominion, and political jealousy next completed the bars

* It is four hundred and fifty-one feet high; the roof of the cathedral is three hundred and sixty feet from the pavement; but more even than for these gigantic proportions it is fitted to arrest the traveller's admiration as containing the masterpieces of Rubens, the Taking Down from and Elevating on the Cross. Sir Joshua Reynolds justly observed, that whoever had not seen the great works of Rubens at Antwerp, could form no adequate idea either of the genius of that great artist or of the power of art. The paintings in the Museum, especially those by Rubens and Vandyke, are inimitable.—MALTE BRUN, viii. 618; REYNOLDS' *Tour in Flanders—Works*, ii. 264, 300; and *Personal Observation*.

which Catholic oppression had erected against its advancement. The revolt of Holland was the natural consequence of the atrocities of the Duke of Alva, and the massacre of fifty thousand Protestants, on the scaffold and at the stake, by the Spanish government. The closing of the mouth of the Scheldt, by the political and commercial jealousy of the Dutch, was the inevitable result and deserved punishment of the atrocious cruelty which converted their most industrious and valuable subjects into successful rivals and inveterate enemies.¹

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

¹ Malte-
Brun, viii.
618, 619.

Amidst all its degradation, however, and when its population had sunk to sixty thousand inhabitants, the eagle glance of Napoleon at once discerned the vast natural advantages and incalculable political importance of this city. No sooner had it attracted his attention, than he resolved to make it one of the greatest bulwarks of his dominions; the grand naval and military arsenal of northern Europe; the advanced post from which he might launch the thunders of his arms against the independence and existence of England. Under his vigorous administration, everything soon assumed a new aspect. The subjection of Holland to the imperial sway had already extinguished, if not the commercial jealousy of the Dutch, at least their power of interfering with the prosperity of their Flemish rival; the vessels which they had sunk at the mouth of the Scheldt, to impede its navigation, were raised; the sand-banks, which had been accumulating for centuries, were cleared away; new bulwarks were annexed to the works, already formidable, of the citadel; vast wet docks were added to the harbour, capable of containing forty ships of the line; and an arsenal adequate to the equipment of half the navy of France was constructed. Great as are these works, however, and durably as they will remain monuments of the grandeur of conception and prophetic spirit of the French Emperor, they were but a small part of what he had intended for this favourite bulwark of his empire. "The

3.
Napoleon's
designs for
its amplifi-
cation.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

works hitherto erected at Antwerp," said Napoleon at St Helena, "were nothing to what I intended. The whole sandy plain, which now stretches for miles behind the Tête de Flandre on the left bank of the river, was to have been inclosed by fortifications, and formed into a vast city; the imperial dockyards and basins, the arsenal and magazines, were to have been constructed there; those on the right bank were to have been given up to private merchants. Antwerp was to me a province in itself. It is one of the chief causes of my exile to St Helena; for the required cession of that fortress was my principal reason for refusing peace at Chatillon. If they would have left it to me, peace would have been concluded. France without Antwerp and the frontiers of the Rhine is nothing."¹

¹ Las Cases, vii. 43, 44, 56, 57.

4.
Efforts always made by England to keep this great stronghold from France.

Antwerp is the point from which, in every age, the independence of the British isles has been seriously menaced. When the Duke of Parma prepared a land force in the time of Queen Elizabeth to overthrow the liberties of England and the Protestant faith, it was in the Scheldt and at Ostend that all his preparations were made. It was neither from Boulogne nor Cherbourg, from Brest nor Toulon, that Napoleon, after his profound naval combinations of 1805 had been defeated, intended to invade the British isles. The Scheldt was the point of attack; Antwerp and Flushing were the strongholds in which sixty sail of the line were to be prepared as the centre of that mighty squadron, which, by a second battle of Actium, was to strike down the mistress of the seas. A vast and skilful system of internal communication had been brought to bear upon this point, and enabled the French to assemble there their naval stores and seamen without incurring the hazard of a coastways navigation. Sensible of her danger, it had been the fixed policy of Great Britain, for centuries, to prevent this formidable outwork against her independence from falling into the hands of her enemies; and the best days of her

history are chiefly occupied with the struggle to ward off such a disaster. It was for this that William fought and Marlborough conquered; that Nelson died and Wellington triumphed; that Chatham lighted a conflagration in every quarter of the globe, and Pitt braved all the dangers of the Revolutionary war.

It is one of the most singular facts in the history of mankind, that the English government, after having for a hundred and fifty years contended for the attainment of this object, and at length secured it by the restoration, under the guarantee of the European powers, of the seventeen provinces into one united dominion, should have voluntarily, within twenty years afterwards, undone the work of its own hands; aided in the partition of the Netherlands into two separate states, each incapable of maintaining its independence, and one of which necessarily fell under the dominion of her enemies; and at length actually joined her fleets to the Gallic revolutionary armies to restore Antwerp, the great stronghold prepared by Napoleon for our subjugation, to the son-in-law of the monarch of France, and the sway of the tricolor flag! Such a proceeding would be unparalleled in history, if it were not equalled, perhaps exceeded, by the refusal at the same time to lend any assistance to the Grand Seignior, then reduced to the last straits by the defeat of Konieh, and consequent abandonment of him to the arms of Russia, who failed not, as the price of protection, to exact the humiliating treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, and the exclusion of the British flag from the Dardanelles and the Black Sea. Thus, in our anxiety to restore Antwerp, the fulcrum from which our independence is to be assailed in Western Europe, to France, we have surrendered Constantinople, the bulwark of the East, the key of our Eastern dominions, to Russia! The simultaneous occurrence of two such acts on the part of government, without any mark of disapprobation save from the reflecting few in the country, proves that

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

5.
Extraordi-
nary infa-
tuation
which has
led to its
abandon-
ment in
later times.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

there are occasions in which, under the influence of faction and in the heat of political contest, a nation may not only lose its reason, but become insensible to the strongest even of all animal instincts, that of self-preservation.

6.
Proposals
of Austria
for a British
diversion.

At the commencement of the contest in Germany, the cabinet of Vienna made the most urgent representations to the British government on the subject of a powerful diversion by an English land force in the north of Germany, whither the Austrian Grand Army was originally destined, and where so many ardent spirits, smarting under humiliation and oppression, were waiting only the appearance of an external armed force to raise the standard of general insurrection. They proposed that a diversion should be attempted by an expedition of Anglo-Sicilian troops on the coasts of Italy; that the military operations in the Peninsula should be continued; and that a strong effort should be made towards the mouth of the Elbe. There can be no question that the disposable forces of England, at this juncture, were equal to these operations, extensive though they were; for she had a hundred thousand regular troops, which could be ordered on foreign service, in the British islands; forty thousand of whom, in Spain, under Wellington, forty thousand in the north of Germany, and twenty thousand in the Mediterranean, would have occasioned no small embarrassment to the French Emperor, especially after he was obliged to concentrate all his forces from the extremities of his dominions, for the decisive struggle on the banks of the Danube. Domestic danger could not be alleged as a reason for declining to make such an effort; for the British islands, encircled by their invincible fleets, garrisoned by eighty thousand admirable regular, and three hundred thousand local militia, and animated with an enthusiastic military spirit, were beyond the reach of attack. Nor was time wanting; for the British government was, in November 1808, in full pos-

session of the resolution of the cabinet of Vienna to declare war: it was communicated to the world in the king's speech on the 15th December of that year; and hostilities were not commenced on the Inn till the 9th April following, before which time, even with the utmost possible tardiness of preparation, the grand expedition for the north of the vast theatre of operations might have been ready to sail from the British harbours.¹

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

¹ Mr Can-
ning's
Speech,
Parl. Deb.
xvi. 352.

In this momentous crisis the cabinet of St James's was not wanting to itself, or to the noble position assigned to it in the contests of nations. Undiscouraged by the disastrous issue of Sir John Moore's expedition, they resolved not only to resume the contest with increased vigour in the Spanish peninsula, but to aid the common cause by a powerful demonstration in the north of Europe. Many reasons concurred, however, in dissuading them from adopting the proposed plan of landing in the north of Germany. Matters were entirely changed since the year 1807, when such a direction of our force was attempted, and when, if brought to the scene of action some months earlier, it might have been attended with important, perhaps decisive effects. Prussia was then in arms against France; Denmark was neutral; Russia engrossed the attention of Napoleon's principal army on the Vistula or the Alle; and Austria, collecting her strength in Bohemia, was prepared, on the first serious reverse, to fall with overwhelming force on his line of communication. Now everything was changed. The north of Germany, strewn with the wrecks of independent states, with its principal strongholds in the hands of the enemy, could no longer be relied on for efficient co-operation with a regular army; Russia, instead of being the enemy of France, was now her obsequious ally; Denmark was animated by a spirit of more than ordinary hostility to Great Britain; and though the inclination of Prussia to extricate herself from her fetters could not be doubted, yet her military resources were severely crippled, her strongest fortresses were in the

7.

Reasons for
not sending
the expedi-
tion to the
north of
Germany
or Spain.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

¹ Mr Can-
ning's
Speech,
Parl. Deb.
xvi. 333,
336. Lord
Castle-
reagh's, *ib.*
99, 103.

possession of the conqueror, and her government had suffered so severely from their recent ill-advised effort, that there was every reason to fear that they would now adhere to their old system of selfish indecision. A powerful army, if landed at San Sebastian, might, indeed, paralyse all the imperial forces in Spain, and occasion the evacuation of the whole Peninsula by the troops of Napoleon. But the effect of such remote success would be inconsiderable on the vital line of operations in the valley of the Danube; and if the French Emperor were there successful, he would soon regain his lost footing beyond the Pyrenees, and securely complete, with undiminished strength, from Gibraltar to Hamburg, his vast naval preparations for our subjugation.¹

8.
Reasons for
selecting the
Scheldt as
the point of
attack.

On the other hand, a variety of considerations equally powerful concurred to recommend Antwerp as the grand point of attack. Its formidable strength and increasing importance as a great naval station and arsenal, its close proximity to the British shores, the anxiety which Napoleon had evinced for its extension—pointed it out as the quarter from which, more than any other, serious danger was to be apprehended. Its fortifications, though extensive and formidable, if in good condition, were in a state hardly susceptible of defence; there was scarcely any water in the ditches; the rampart, unarmed with cannon, was in many places dilapidated and tottering; and the garrison, consisting of little more than two thousand invalids and coast-guards, was altogether unequal to the defence of its extensive works. The regular army of France was so completely absorbed by the war on the Danube and that in the Peninsula, that no considerable force could be assembled for its relief: and although, if operations in form were to be attempted, an immense body of national guards would doubtless converge to the threatened point, yet there was a fair prospect of carrying the town at once by escalade, almost before the intelligence of its danger could reach the government at Paris.

Immense would be the effect, moral as well as material, of such a victory. It would demonstrate that even the territory of the great nation, and its strongest fortresses, were not beyond the reach of attack; roll back on France the terrors of invasion; destroy at once the principal naval resources and fleets of the enemy; animate all the north of Germany by the sight of a powerful army having gained a firm footing on their own shores; and intercept, by pressing dangers at home, a large portion of the reinforcements destined for the Grand Army. Even if Austria were finally to succumb, still the results gained would be immense. The most cherished naval establishment of the enemy would be destroyed; the centre of his maritime operations ruined; and his projected naval crusade against Great Britain thrown back for several years, if not rendered altogether abortive. Sound policy, therefore, recommended such a direction of our hostility as, while it powerfully aided our allies, was conducive also to our own safety; and which, increasing the chance of a successful combination against France on the Danube, provided at the same time for the case of the imperial eagles returning, as heretofore, laden with the spoils of Germany, to their menacing position on the heights of Boulogne.¹

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

¹ Mr Can-
ning's
Speech,
Parl. Deb.
xvi. 338,
347.

But, though the cabinet of St James's thus judged rightly in selecting Antwerp as the point of attack, and magnanimously in resolving to put forth the whole strength of the British empire, without sharing in the general panic produced by the calamitous termination of Sir John Moore's expedition; yet, in one vital point, they still proved themselves novices in combination, uninstructed by the military experience even of sixteen years. Although the resolution of the cabinet of Vienna to declare war had been known since the November preceding, though the Austrians crossed the Inn on the 9th April, though the battle of Ecmühl was fought on the 21st April, and that of Aspern on the 22d May, it was not till the end of the latter month that any serious preparations began to be

9.
Unhappy
delay in the
expedition.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

made by ministers for an expedition to lighten the load which had for two months been pressing on the Austrian forces. They were deterred by a communication received from the commander-in-chief, Sir D. Dundas, on the 22d of March preceding, shortly after the broken bands of Sir John Moore's army had returned from Spain, stating that fifteen thousand men could not be spared from the home service for any foreign expedition. That veteran officer in making, and government in acting on such a statement, alike proved themselves unequal to the station which they occupied in the grand struggle. To accomplish the vital object of beginning the campaign *simultaneously* with the Austrians, and distracting the enemy by a descent on the Scheldt, at the same time that the Archduke Charles entered Bavaria, no sacrifices could have been too great. Even if not a bayonet could have been got from the regular army, every man of the Guards should have been sent, and half of the militia invited to volunteer; and in this way fifty thousand admirable soldiers might with ease have been collected. It was not by never diminishing the usual domestic garrisons, and reckoning none disposable but those who had no home service to perform, that Napoleon carried the French standards to Vienna and the Kremlin.¹

¹ See Sir D. Dundas's Evidence, Parl. Deb. xv. 85, 86. App.

10.
The expedition is resolved on in June, and on a very great scale.

No serious steps were taken, after this abortive inquiry as to the disposable British force, to resume the expedition till the 8th of June, when the muster-rolls of all the regiments in the British islands having been obtained, and shown a disposable force of forty thousand men, preparations in good earnest were commenced. It was still possible to bring them to bear with great effect on the vital operations on the Danube: for the news of the battle of Aspern had just reached this country, and at the same time it was ascertained, by authentic evidence, that Antwerp was in the most defenceless state; that the garrison consisted only of two thousand four hundred men, of whom only fifteen hundred were soldiers, the

remainder being invalids or artificers ; that there were two small breaches on the ramparts, and that the bastions in general were not armed ; that the wet ditch was fordable in some places, and only ten thousand soldiers remained in Holland, and hardly any in Flanders. But the inherent vice of procrastination still paralysed the British councils. Though every day and hour was precious, when the Scheldt was defenceless and Napoleon defeated on the Danube, no orders were given to the ordnance department to prepare battering trains till the 19th June ; and though their preparations were complete, and the navy in readiness by the end of that month, the expedition did not sail till the 28th July, upwards of a week after the result of the battle of Wagram had been known in the British islands. When it is considered that the sea voyage from the Downs to the Scheldt does not occupy above thirty hours ; that the British had thirty-five sail of the line, and transports innumerable at hand for the embarkation ; that Marshal Ney embarked twenty-five thousand men, with all their artillery, in ten minutes ; that Napoleon, who gave his orders to the Grand Army to break up from Boulogne on the 1st September 1805, beheld them on the Rhine on the 23d of the same month, and saw Mack defile before him as a prisoner, with all his army, on the 20th October ; it must be admitted that, notwithstanding all they had suffered from this defect, the British government were still characterised rather by the slowness of the Anglo-Saxon, than the fire of the Norman character.¹

When the expedition, however, even at the eleventh hour, did sail from the British islands, it was on a scale worthy both of the mistress of the seas, and of one of the greatest military powers in Europe. The armament, consisting of thirty-seven ships of the line, twenty-three frigates, thirty-three sloops, eighty-two gun-boats, besides transports innumerable ; and having on board thirty-nine thousand sabres and bayonets, equivalent to above forty-

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

¹ Sir T. Triggis's Evid. Parl. Deb. xv. 138, and xvi. 111, 119. Lord Castlereagh's Speech, and Gen. Craufurd's, Ibid. 222.

11.
Sailing and immense magnitude of the expedition.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

¹ See the
Details in
Parl. Pap.
Deb. xv.
5 and 6.

one thousand of all arms, with two battering trains and all their stores complete, contained above a hundred thousand combatants, and was the largest and best equipped that ever put to sea in modern times. What might it not have accomplished, if conducted with vigour and directed by skill! With a British force of little greater amount, Wellington struck down the empire of France on the field of Waterloo.¹ *

12.
Landing in
Holland,
and great
early success
of the expe-
dition.
July 30.

Atlas,
Plate 4.

This stupendous armament, which whitened the ocean with its sails, arrived on the coast of Holland on the 29th of July. On the following day, twenty thousand men were disembarked in the isle of Walcheren, and speedily took possession of Middleburg, its chief town, besides driving the French troops into the walls of Flushing. At the same time another division landed in Cadsand, and, expelling the enemy from that island, opened the way for the passage of the fleet up the western or principal branch of the Scheldt. Some days afterwards, Sir Richard Strachan, who commanded the naval force, disregarding the distant and ineffectual fire of the Flushing batteries, passed the straits with eighteen ships of the line, and soon both branches of the Scheldt were crowded with the British pendants. Nor was the progress of the land forces less rapid. Ter Veere, a fortress commanding the Veeregat, a narrow entrance leading into the channel which separated South Beveland, was taken, with its garrison of a thousand men; Goes, the capital of the latter island, opened its gates; and SIR JOHN HOPE, an officer destined to future celebrity in the Peninsular war, with seven thousand men, pushing rapidly on, appeared

July 30.

Aug. 1.

* The exact British force, with the King's German Legion, at Waterloo was:—

Infantry,	.	.	.	.	.	29,715
Cavalry,	.	.	.	.	.	8,219
Artillery,	.	.	.	.	.	5,434
Total,	.	.	.	.	.	43,368

sabres and bayonets, or about 45,000, including officers and non-commissioned officers.—See *Adjutant-General's Returns*, 6th Nov. 1816, quoted in *Jones's Waterloo*, 138; *Near Observer*, vol. ii.

before the gates of Bahtz on the evening of the 2d. Such was the consternation produced by the sudden advance and formidable forces, both naval and military, of the invaders, that this important fort, situated at the point of separation of the East and West Scheldt, and the key to both channels, was evacuated in the night by the garrison, and next morning occupied by the British troops. The success of the expedition appeared certain: more than two-thirds of the distance to Antwerp had been got over in three days; both divisions of the Scheldt were full of British vessels; the British standards were only five leagues from that fortress, and in four days more thirty thousand men might be assembled around its walls.¹

It is agreed by all the French military writers, that such was the weakness of Antwerp at that time, that if the English general had taken advantage of the first moment of consternation consequent on the rapid advance of his leading column, pushed across the narrow channel which separates South Beveland from the mainland, and marched up the right bank of the river, he would, in a few hours, have arrived at the gates of the fortress, and, by a *coup-de-main*, carried it to a certainty.* By crossing over to the left bank of the

CHAP.
LX.
1809.
Aug. 2.

¹ Lord Chat-
ham's Desp.
Aug. 2,
1809. Ann.
Reg. 474,
479. App.
to Chron.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
247, 254.

13.
Certainty of
success if
Antwerp
had been
first attack-
ed.

* "Had the English advanced rapidly, either by South Beveland to Antwerp, or with their squadron vigorously pursued ours as it withdrew up the Scheldt, they would have taken by surprise all the forts and defences of the Scheldt. Everything induces the belief that they would have succeeded in burning our arsenals and destroying our fleet. Antwerp, like other places on the frontier, was garrisoned only by the weak depots of regiments which were combating on the Danube. Not one of them was armed. Monnet had six battalions in Flushing. Rousseau, who commanded on the left bank of the Scheldt, had only three or four thousand recruits under his orders, whom he kept at Ghent on account of the insalubrity of the country. Battalions of grenadiers and chasseurs of the national guards, alone, were intrusted with the defence of the coasts."—PELET, iv. 319.

"The fortress of Antwerp, ill defended and paralysed in the first moment of terror, would have easily yielded to a brisk attack."—*Vict. et Conq.* xix. 254.

"The coast was stripped of troops to such a degree, that nothing could have hindered the English from disembarking thirty thousand men on the left bank of the Scheldt, and in three days arriving with their numerous artillery before Antwerp. Meanwhile, the remainder might have entered the Scheldt to fix our attention on Flushing and the Isle of Cadsand. Antwerp had hardly a garrison; our fleet would have been taken by surprise, and its retreat rendered

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LX.

1809.

¹ Lord Chatham's Instructions, Parl. Deb. xv. App. No. 1. Jom. iii. 300.

Scheldt, and occupying the fort of Tête de Flandre, opposite Antwerp, which could hardly have made any resistance, success was certain ; for the city has no defences whatever on the left bank of the river, and the fleet could neither have got up above the Tête de Flandre, nor escaped destruction even in the dockyards themselves, from a bombardment from the opposite side, not half a mile distant. The instructions to the commander-in-chief, Lord Chatham, were precise ; and they bore that the main object of the expedition was the destruction of the ships building or afloat in the Scheldt, and of the arsenals and dockyards in Antwerp, Terneuze, and Flushing ; and, as an ulterior or subordinate object only, the reduction of the island of Walcheren.¹ *

But England had not at that period two Wellingtons in her service. Lord Chatham, to whom the expedition was intrusted, neither inherited the energy of his father,

impossible ; insomuch that, by merely occupying the fort of Tête de Flandre opposite Antwerp on the left bank of the Scheldt, the success of the enterprise would have been certain."—JOMINI, *Vie de Napoléon*, iii. 299, 300.

Napoleon has left a highly important observation on this subject. "The fleet," says he, "when the expedition arrived on the coast of Holland, was moored off Flushing. The great object of Chatham should have been to cut off the fleet from Antwerp, which would necessarily have drawn after it the destruction of both, for Antwerp had only a garrison of three thousand men. This might have been done by pushing on a corps of six thousand men through South Beveland to Bahtz the day the expedition landed ; the fleet would thus have been cut off from Antwerp, and both it and that fortress must have surrendered. But from the moment that the fleet got up to Antwerp, which it did soon after the siege of Flushing began, the failure of the expedition was certain."—NAPOLEON in MONTHOLON, ii. 261 ; and i. 219.—"I am of opinion," said he to O'Meara, "that if you had landed a few thousand men at first at Williamstadt, and marched direct to Antwerp, you might, between consternation, want of preparation, and the uncertainty of the number of assailants, have taken it by a *coup-de-main*. But after the fleet got up, it was impossible."—O'MEARA, i. 255.

* "You are, upon the receipt of these our instructions, to repair with our said troops to the Scheldt, and carry into effect the following instructions, in conjunction with the commander of the naval forces. This conjoint expedition has for its object the capture or destruction of the enemy's ships either building or afloat at Antwerp or Flushing, or afloat in the Scheldt, the destruction of the arsenals and dockyards at Antwerp, Terneuze, and Flushing, the reduction of the island of Walcheren, and rendering the Scheldt, if possible, no longer navigable for ships of war."—LORD CHATHAM'S *Instructions*, 16th July 1806 ; *Parl. Deb.* xv. App. No. 1.

the great Earl of Chatham, nor shared the capacity of his immortal brother, William Pitt. A respectable veteran, not without merit in the routine of official duty at home, he was totally destitute of the activity and decision requisite in an enterprise, in which success was to be won rather by rapidity of movement than deliberation of conduct. Destitute of experience, unknown to fame, of indolent habits, he owed his appointment to court favour, which ministers were chiefly culpable for not resisting to the uttermost of their power. Reversing, in consequence, alike the tenor of his instructions and the dictates of common sense on the subject, he directed his force, in the first instance, to the last object with which he was intrusted; and instead of pushing on in the outset by forced marches to seize Antwerp and the forts of the river, which would have prevented the return of the fleet from Flushing, where it lay at the time,¹ before the enemy

CHAP.
LX.

1809.
14.

Ruinous
delay on
the part of
Lord Chat-
ham, who
besieges
Flushing
first.

¹ Lord Chat-
ham's In-
structions,
Parl. Deb.
xv. App.
No. 1. Jom.
Vie de Nap.
iii. 300.

It appears also, from Lord Chatham's evidence before the parliamentary committee, that he was in possession of the more detailed government plan, which was to proceed across South Beveland immediately after landing, and land the troops at Sandvliet on the right bank of the Scheldt, opposite Bahtz, and thence push on direct to Antwerp. On the 5th of August, twenty thousand men, according to his statement, might have been collected there, a force amply sufficient for the complete success of the expedition. "I conceive," says Lord Chatham, "what was intended to be done was, by landing such part of the army as was not engaged at the siege of Flushing or employed in the reduction of Walcheren, *as soon as possible at Sandvliet*, and to proceed against Antwerp according to circumstances, which could not be distinctly known till the arrival of the expedition. The expedition, under the most favourable circumstances, might have arrived at Sandvliet in four days from leaving the Downs: on the 4th of August, the infantry and cavalry might have been disembarked at that place, and the heavy stores and ordnance in two or three days more."—*LORD CHATHAM'S EVIDENCE; Parl. Deb.* xv. 350, 359, *App.* Sandvliet is only ten miles from Antwerp; and the first considerable reinforcement of the enemy arrived at that town on the 11th and 12th. It is evident, therefore, that the success of the expedition was certain, if the government plan of pushing up the Scheldt with the bulk of the army, leaving a division only to observe Flushing, had been complied with. But the cabinet at home appear to have not sufficiently impressed upon Lord Chatham the necessity of adhering energetically to this plan, and are responsible for not having interrupted the siege of Flushing when once it was commenced. He himself had evidently not capacity sufficient to perceive either where the vital point of the operations lay, or by what means their object was to be attained. He was evidently wholly unfit for the command, which he owed to the unhappy partiality of royal favour.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

15.
Siege and
capture of
Flushing.

Aug. 13.

could collect a force for their defence, lost the precious hours, big with the fate of the campaign, in reducing that seaport, valueless as a post in advance after the fleet had entered the Scheldt, incapable of defence after Antwerp had fallen, if required as a support in case of retreat.

Having adopted this unhappy resolution, Lord Chatham prosecuted the subordinate object of reducing Flushing with great vigour and success. The garrison were hotly driven into the works, with considerable loss, on the first approach of the besiegers; several sallies, afterwards undertaken, were repulsed; and the artillery having been quickly landed, the trenches were armed, approaches commenced and pushed on with great rapidity. On the 13th, the breaching batteries opened their fire on the land side from fifty-two heavy guns; while seven ships of the line, and a large flotilla of bomb-vessels, kept up a cannonade with uncommon vigour from the sea. It was then found, what subsequent experience has since abundantly verified, that there are no land batteries, however strong, which can withstand, along an equal space in front, the well-supported fire of several ships of the line. The sea-defences were speedily ruined, and every gun bearing on the water silenced; the town took fire in several places, and the inhabitants, beset with a flaming tempest both from the north and south, besought the governor, as the only means of avoiding total ruin, to surrender. Such was the consternation produced by the bombardment, that, after it had continued three days, and the English troops had effected a lodgment within musket-shot of the rampart, the French general proposed a suspension of arms, and the town was surrendered on the 16th, with five thousand eight hundred prisoners and two hundred pieces of cannon. The total prisoners taken since the landing of the expedition exceeded seven thousand.¹

¹ Lord Chatham's Desp. Ann. Reg. 1809, 490, 493. App. to Chron. Pel. iv. 327.

Hitherto fortune seemed to have smiled on all the efforts of the expedition; but she soon showed that, like others of her sex, she reserved her favours only for the

daring and the enterprising. The time lost in besieging Flushing proved fatal to all the other objects of the expedition. Indefatigable were the efforts of the French and Dutch governments, during that precious breathing-time, to direct troops to the menaced point ; and in a fortnight it was beyond the reach of attack. On the 12th, the King of Holland arrived at the head of his guards, and five thousand troops of the line ; the generals commanding in Flanders and Picardy despatched an equal number, who arrived from the 14th to the 20th. Meanwhile the fleet was removed above the town ; the batteries were armed ; the ditches cleared out and filled with water, and the national guards of all the surrounding departments were poured into the fortress. While these active preparations were going on, twenty thousand admirable troops were kept inactive in South Beveland, almost within sight of the steeples of Antwerp ; and so dilatory were the proceedings of the English general, that though Flushing surrendered on the 16th, it was not till the 26th that he advanced the headquarters to Bahtz, a distance not exceeding thirty miles. By that time thirty thousand of the enemy were assembled on the Scheldt ; Bernadotte, who had been despatched by the government at Paris to take the command, had put Antwerp in a respectable state of defence ; the squadron was in safety, ulterior success impossible ; while three thousand of the British troops were already in the hospital, and the pestilential marshes in that unhealthy district were fast exercising their malignant influence on the health of the soldiers. In these circumstances, it was rightly judged by Lord Chatham and a council of war, whose opinion was unanimous on the subject, that farther advance was impossible ; and orders were given, in the beginning of September, to withdraw the whole troops into the island of Walcheren.¹

CHAP.
LX.

1809.
16.

The time
lost in re-
ducing
Flushing
saves Ant-
werp.
Aug. 12.

Aug. 26.

¹ Parl. Deb.
xvi. App.
321. Lord
Chatham's
Desp. Sept.
2, 1809.
Ann. Reg.
1809, 502,
App. to
Chron. Jom.
iii. 302, 303.
Pel. iv. 328,
336.

It was at first thought that it would have been practicable to have retained possession of this important con-

CHAP.
LX.1809.
17.

The retention of Walcheren, at first attempted, is at last abandoned as hopeless.

quest, and doubtless, if it had been so, the acquisition would have been of the last consequence, as hermetically closing the Scheldt, and rendering useless all the vast naval preparations of the enemy in that quarter. At that particular moment, it was of the more consequence to retain possession of that island, as the negotiations with Austria were not only not yet brought to a conclusion, but it was sometimes more than doubtful, during their continuance, whether war would not again break out. In that event, it would, of course, have been of the greatest importance to keep thirty thousand of the enemy grouped under the walls of Antwerp. Fifteen thousand men accordingly were left as a garrison in the island, and the remainder of the troops returned to England. But the malaria distemper of the country, since too well known under the name of the Walcheren fever, proved so fatal in its ravages that it was deemed impolitic to retain it permanently, especially after the conclusion of peace between Austria and France had removed the principal motive for keeping the troops in that unhealthy station. Towards the middle of September, the average number of deaths was from two to three hundred a-week, and nearly half the garrison was in hospital. Orders were therefore given to abandon the island. In the middle of November the works and naval basins of Flushing were destroyed, and before Christmas the whole was evacuated by the British troops; but it appeared from a parliamentary return, that seven thousand men had been lost in the enterprise, and that nearly half the troops engaged in it brought home with them the seeds of a distemper which few were able entirely to shake off during the remainder of their lives.¹*

Nov. 23.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1809, 225.
Jom. iii.
303, 304.

It is observed by Mr Hallam, that the state trials of England exhibit the most appalling accumulation of judicial iniquity which is to be found in any age or

* The sick, returned at various times to England from Walcheren, amounted to 12,863.—*Parl. Papers*, No. 24; *Parl. Deb.* xv. 23, *App.*

country in the world, and far exceeding in atrocity anything recorded of legal injustice in the annals even of Eastern despotism. The reason, he justly adds, is, that the monarch could not wreak his vengeance, or the contending nobles or parties destroy each other, as in other states, by open outrage or undisguised violence; and that the courts of law were the theatre, and state prosecutions the engines, by which this oppression was perpetrated, and these contests of faction conducted. If the purification of the legal tribunals, which took place at the Revolution, has freed, as it undoubtedly has, the judicial ermine of England from this hideous imputation, it has only, in many cases, transferred it to another quarter; and parliament is the arena in which, from henceforth, as the contests of parties were conducted, the historian is to find the traces of the indelible corruption and weakness of humanity. On no other principle, indeed, can the frequent gross injustice, and occasional almost political insanity of the English legislature and people, during the last hundred and fifty years, be explained; and those who hope, by rendering our institutions more democratical, to remedy these evils, would do well to become still more radical in their cure, and apply their reform to the human heart. It is a common remark in parliament, that, in party questions, the real motive of the speaker is never divulged in debate; and that the considerations and objects which both sides have most at heart, are those which are with the greatest care withdrawn from the view. All parties have, in this way, come to reduce to perfection, in a practical form, the celebrated saying of Talleyrand, that the "great object of speech is to conceal the thoughts." The truth of these principles was signally illustrated in the two great objects of party contention during the session of 1809—the accusations against the Duke of York, and the Walcheren expedition.

That the spring of 1809 was the grand crisis of the

CHAP.
LX.

1809.
18.

Blind injustice which frequently characterises the proceedings of the British parliament.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.
19.

Pernicious
consump-
tion of time
in debates
in parlia-
ment at this
time.

war ; that Austria and Spain were then, for the first time, brought to act together in real earnest, and hurl their strength, animated by the highest degree of patriotic enthusiasm, against the enemy ; that the military power of Britain had then risen to an unparalleled degree of efficiency, and was prepared, under renowned leaders, to follow up the career of victory recently opened to her arms, was universally known and acknowledged. Every man in the empire felt that the moment had arrived when Europe was to be disenthralled by one convulsive effort, or the fetters riveted, for a period to which no termination could be foreseen, on the enchained nations. What, then, at such a moment, was the grand object of consideration in the House of Commons ? Was it to cement the alliance, to pour forth the treasures of England with a profusion worthy of the occasion, and increase, by every means in their power, the efficiency of the army upon which such mighty destinies depended ? Quite the reverse. The popular party in the House of Commons appeared to value the crisis only in proportion to the means which it afforded them of directing, with additional effect, their attacks upon the government, and augmenting the difficulties experienced in the discharge of its vital duties by the executive. And at the moment when Austria was straining every nerve for the conflict, and Napoleon was preparing the forces which dealt out the thunderbolts of Echmühl and Wagram, the British House of Commons was, for months together, occupied with no other subject but the secret springs of a few promotions in the army, and the details of the commander-in-chief's intrigue with his artful mistress, Mrs Clarke !

20.
Charges
against the
Duke of
York.

The attack on the Duke of York's administration of the army was founded upon the allegation of his having disposed of that part of the patronage with which he was intrusted as commander-in-chief for corrupt or unworthy considerations. The debates and examinations on the

subject began in the end of January, and continued, almost without the intermission of a day, till the 17th March; absorbing thus nearly the whole time both of government and of the country, at the very moment when a concentration of all the national thought and energies was required for the prosecution of the gigantic campaign in progress on the Continent. But this was not all: the time thus spent was not only wasted, but it led to the most pernicious results. Nothing whatever came out against the commander-in-chief, but that he had occasionally admitted a designing and artful mistress to a certain share in the disposal of commissions; and that she made use of, and exaggerated this influence to obtain bribes, unknown to him, from the applicants for promotion. If the moralist must ever see much to condemn in the indulgence of habits which never fail in any rank to degrade the character of such as become slaves to them, the statesman must admit that a more deplorable waste of time and national interest never occurred, than when such details were for months together, at such a crisis, made the subject of legislative investigation. Mr Wardle, the mover of the inquiry, rose for a short time into great popularity, and then sank at once to rise no more. After a fatiguing investigation and debate, which occupies above fifteen hundred pages of the parliamentary debates, the charges were negatived by a majority of 241—the numbers being 364 to 123.¹

No man of sense, who reads the proceedings, can now doubt that this decision was fully borne out by the evidence, and that the Duke of York at that period was the victim of factious injustice. But meanwhile the public mind became violently excited; the fury of popular obloquy was irresistible; and, government deeming it necessary to yield to the torrent, the Duke sent in his resignation. This took place just four days before the commander-in-chief was officially called upon to report upon the vital point of the force that could be

CHAP.
LX.1809.
Jan. 27.
March 17.March 17.
1 Parl. Deb.
xii. 263,
1057, and
xiii. 1710.21.
His resignation
in consequence of
the universal clamour.
March 18.

March 21.

CHAP. spared for the projected expedition to the Scheldt.
 LX. Thus, at the very time when the most important mili-
 1809. tary operations ever engaged in by England were under consideration, the ambition of selfish faction, and the fury of misguided zeal, combined to introduce new and wholly inexperienced persons to the direction of the army, and chase from its command the public-spirited prince whose judicious reforms and practical improvements had brought it from an unworthy state of depression to its actual condition of efficiency and glory. The deplorable postponement of the Walcheren expedition till it was too late to serve as a relief to the heroism of Austria; its calamitous issue when it was undertaken; and the abortive result of the first triumphs in Spain, are thus immediately connected with this act of national absurdity and injustice.^{1*}

¹ Parl. Deb.
 xii. 263,
 1057; xiii.
 1710.

22.
 Debates on
 the Wal-
 cheren ex-
 pedition.

Much in the same spirit were the debates which took place on the Walcheren expedition. No fault, indeed, could here be found with the theme of discussion. The failure of so vast an armament, fitted out at such a cost, adequate to such achievements, formed a subject worthy of the anxious investigation of the parliament of England; and if it had elicited either generous feelings or elevated views from those who conducted the accusation, no more useful subject of contemplation to the historian could have been presented. But this was very far indeed from being the case. Though the investigation was conducted with great industry and ability, the views taken on the side of the Opposition were so overstrained and exaggerated, as to lead to no useful or practical result. Their great object was to show that the whole blame of the failure of the expedition rested with minis-

* Mrs Clarke, the leading character in this maze of scandal and intrigue, was a woman possessed of considerable personal attractions, and no small share of ready wit and repartee. When asked in a subsequent trial by a cross-examining counsel, "Pray, madam, under whose *protection* are you just now?" She immediately answered, bowing to the court, "Under that of my Lord Chief Justice." The court was convulsed with laughter, in which his Lordship heartily joined, and the barrister was silent.

ters, and ministers alone ; that success was at no period, and by no efforts attainable ; that the point of attack was ill chosen, the force ill directed, and the whole cost and blood of the armament misapplied. Nothing can be more evident than that these charges were in a great part wholly groundless, as the expedition was clearly directed against the most important part of the enemy's resources ; the effects of success would have been immense, and of vital moment to the national independence of England ; the forces employed were fully adequate to the object in view ; and the general instructions given, such as would, if energetically acted upon, have unquestionably led to decisive success.*

The real points in which government were blamable, and for which it is impossible to find any adequate excuse, were the long delay which occurred in determining upon the expedition, and the not straining every nerve to send it out in April or May, instead of the end of July ; and the sanctioning the appointment of an officer as commander-in-chief, unknown to fame, and obviously inadequate to the direction of such an enterprise. Yet these points were hardly ever touched on in the course of the debate, so great was the anxiety to throw the whole blame upon ministers, rather than upon a commander known to have owed his appointment to

23.
The real points in which the conduct of the expedition was blamable were not touched on.

* The general policy of the expedition, according to the original instructions of government, was clearly established by the following documents. 1st, In Lord Castlereagh's secret instructions to Lord Chatham, previous to sailing, it was stated :—"The complete success of the operation would include the capture or destruction of the whole of the enemy's ships, whether building at Antwerp or afloat in the Scheldt ; the entire destruction of their yards and arsenals at Antwerp, Terneuse, and Flushing ; and the rendering the Scheldt, if possible, no longer navigable for ships of war. As the accomplishment of these objects, in their fullest extent, must, in a great measure, depend upon the rapidity with which the enterprise is carried into execution, it has been deemed advisable to appropriate such an amount of force to this service, as may enable you, at the same time that you occupy Walcheren and South Beveland, to advance at once a considerable force against Antwerp, which may be reinforced as soon as Flushing is invested, if not actually reduced. The expedition, therefore, must be considered as not, in the first instance, assuming any other character than a *coup-de-main*, combining with it a powerful diversion against the enemy."—*Secret Instructions, June 1809 ; Parl. Deb. xv. 426, App. 2d*, It was proved by Col.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

¹ Parl. Deb.
xv. App. 1,
and xvi. 194,
422.

24.
Quarrel be-
tween Lord
Castlereagh
and Mr
Canning.

royal favour. After a lengthened investigation and debate, ministers were declared not blamable upon the general policy of the expedition, by a majority, however, of only forty-eight—the numbers being 275 to 227 : a majority which, on the subordinate question of whether the protracted retention of Walcheren was blamable, fell to twenty-three ; a division which clearly demonstrated how strongly the calamitous issue of the expedition had come to influence the public mind.¹

The untoward issue of this expedition, the obloquy which it brought upon government, and the narrow escape which they made from total shipwreck on its result, roused into a flame the ill-smothered embers of a conflagration in the cabinet, and led, at this critical moment, to a change in the most important offices of the state. Mr Canning, who, since the formation of Mr Perceval's administration, had held the seals of the foreign office, had long conceived that Lord Castlereagh, who was secretary at war, was unfit to be intrusted with the important and hourly increasing duties of that department. This opinion, which subsequent events have triumphantly disproved, and which was doubtless chiefly based at that time, in the able but aspiring mind of the foreign secretary, on the illusions of ambition and the whisperings of jealousy, was strongly confirmed by the

Fyers, the chief engineer of the army, and General McLeod, the commander of artillery to the expedition, that, "supposing the army to have landed successively at Sandvliet on the 1st, 2d, and 3d of August, thirty mortars might have been ready in battery to begin the bombardment of the city of Antwerp and fleet on the evening of the 9th or morning of the 10th, and that both might have been destroyed if they did not surrender."—*Ibid.* 553, 566, *App.* 3d, The battering train was immense, amounting to seventy battering guns and seventy-four mortars.—*Ibid.* sec. 7, *App. Evid.* c. 138. 4th, On the 9th August, there were only a few thousand troops and national guards in Antwerp, all in a great state of alarm : the first reinforcements of any amount which arrived, were the King of Holland's guards and troops of the line, in number five thousand, who did not arrive till the 12th, and could not have entered the town if the English had been before it.—JOMINI, *Vie de NAPOLEON*, iii. 302. These facts and documents are a complete exculpation of ministers in every particular, except the choice of Lord Chatham, and the delay in sending out the expedition.

disastrous issue of the Scheldt expedition ; which he ascribed, with how much justice the preceding observations will show, to the ignorance and incapacity of the secretary at war, to whom the direction of its details had been in a great measure intrusted. Early in April he had intimated to the Duke of Portland, the nominal head of the administration, that he conceived the public service required that either he or Lord Castlereagh should resign ; and offered to remove all difficulties by his own retirement. Anxious to prevent any schism in the cabinet at such a crisis, the Duke consulted Lord Camden, and prevailed on Mr Canning meanwhile to suspend his resignation : the King was afterwards spoken to on the subject, but he also postponed any definite opinion.¹

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

April 4.

¹ Mr Canning's Statement, Nov. 14, 1809, Ann. Reg. 1809, 239. Canning's Life, i, 56.

A long negotiation subsequently ensued, which, against Mr Canning's strongest remonstrances, was protracted till the issue of the Scheldt expedition became known ; and although some of Lord Castlereagh's friends were made aware of what was going on, yet they did not deem it advisable to make him privy to it. At length, in the first week of September, his lordship was informed of the whole by his friends, further concealment having become impossible by Mr Canning's resignation. Lord Castlereagh, under the impression that he had been ill-used by Mr Canning in this transaction, by not having been made acquainted from the first with the steps calculated to prejudice him which he had adopted, immediately sent Mr Canning a challenge. The parties met ; and at the second fire Mr Canning fell, having received a severe wound in the thigh. Both gentlemen had previously sent in their resignations ; and though a reconciliation was subsequently effected, and their joint services were regained for their country, their quarrel had the effect, at the time, of excluding both from administration.² After an unsuccessful attempt to effect a coalition with Lords Grey and Grenville, Lord Wellesley was recalled

25.

Which leads to a duel between them, and the resignation of both. Sept. 8.

Sept. 22.
² Ann. Reg. 1809, 239. Mr Canning's Statement, Nov. 14, 1809, App. to Chron. 517, 530. Canning's Life, i. 56, 83. Life and Speeches.

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LX.

1809.

from the Spanish embassy to fill the situation of foreign secretary ; Lord Castlereagh was, two years afterwards, reinstated in office, and contributed in an essential manner to the triumphs and glories of the grand alliance ; but Mr Canning, who aimed at the highest destinies, for long declined all offers of employment at home, and did not appear again in official situation till after the peace.

26.
Changes in
the admin-
istration.

A general change now took place in the administration. The Duke of Portland, whose health had for some time been declining, resigned his place as head of the government ; and as the negotiation with Lords Grey and Grenville had failed in procuring their accession to the cabinet, the ministry was reconstructed entirely from the Tory party. Mr Perceval filled the place of first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer ; the Earl of Liverpool was transferred from the home to the war office ; Mr Ryder became home, and Marquis Wellesley foreign secretary. There can be no doubt that all these offices were filled by men of business and talent ; and the cabinet, as so constructed, possessed the inestimable advantage of unity of opinion on all vital questions, and especially on the great one of the prosecution of the war : an advantage so great that, for its want, no acquirements however great, no talents however splendid, can in the long run compensate. But still the abilities of none of these statesmen, with the exception of Marquis Wellesley, were either of the highest order or the most brilliant character ; and it is a remarkable circumstance, indicating the power of unity of purpose and resolution of mind, in a nation and its government, to compensate for the want of the showy qualities of the orator or the practised skill of the parliamentary debater, that the most glorious triumphs recorded in the history of England were achieved, not only when the persons possessing in the highest degree these qualities were not in the administration, but when they were actively engaged on the side of the Opposition.¹

¹ Ann. Reg.
1809, 239.
Canning's
Life, 84.
Works,
vol. i.

GEORGE CANNING, whom this unhappy affair excluded from office for several years, was the most finished orator who had appeared in parliament since the days of Pitt and Fox. Born of respectable, though not opulent parents, descended from an honourable line of ancestors, he was yet destitute of the advantages of rank and fortune, and owed his elevation entirely to the early display of brilliant talents at Oxford—that noble establishment, which reflects, as it were in a mirror, the empire, shaded only with a more aristocratic hue than the original, and where genius so often meets with the friendship, or acquires the distinction, which determines its direction in future life. Originally destined for the bar, he was reluctantly pursuing the thorny study of the law, when the fame of his oratorical talents attracted the notice of Mr Pitt, then fully alive to the importance of drawing to his standard all that he could collect of debating power, and counteracting by the influence of government the natural disposition of youth to range itself under the colours of Opposition. Mr Canning had originally been imbued with Whig principles, and his nearest relations were of that party ; but the horrors of the French Revolution had produced that change in his mind which they induced, at that period, in so many of the best of mankind. The leaders of Opposition had nothing to offer him ; and, upon a conference with Mr Pitt in 1793, he found himself fully prepared to concur in all his views on the leading objects of policy. Thus he entered parliament for Newport in 1793, an avowed supporter of the Tory administration ; his first speech, delivered on 31st January 1794, already bespoke the practised orator, formed on the models of ancient eloquence ; and, to the end of his life, he continued the steady opponent of *French* revolutionary principles. But it would have been well for his fame, as well as for the fortunes of his country, if he had been equally proof against the seductions as against the terrors of democratic ambition ;¹ if he had seen the

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27.Youth and
first intro-
duction to
public life
of Mr Can-
ning.¹ Canning's
Life, i. 1,
23.

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28.
His charac-
ter as an
orator and
statesman.

syren in the same colours when placed by his side as when arrayed with his enemies ; and remained steady, in exalted stations in maturer years, to those principles for which he had bravely combated in early youth under the ancient banners of England.

Endowed by nature with the soul of genius, the fire of poetry, and the glow of eloquence ; an accomplished classical scholar, and deeply versed in native literature, Mr Canning acquired, before the end of his career, a greater command over the House of Commons than any statesman ever gained from the mere force of oratorical power. Without the debating energy of Fox, the prophetic elevation of Pitt, or the philosophic wisdom of Burke, he possessed, in a higher degree than any of the three, the power of captivating his hearers by the charm of diction and the graces of an accomplished oratory. Nor was it only in the ornate branches of composition that he excelled. In severer studies he was also a perfect master, and none treated the abstruse and difficult subjects of the monetary changes, and the corn laws, with more lucid effect. His state-papers are a model, not only of terse and finished composition, but of cogent and accurate reasoning ; his conversational powers were of the highest order ; and much of his public influence was, in his later days, owing to those private friends whom the charm of his society had rendered insensible to the ultimate dangers of his career. He was early impressed with the strongest sense of the consequences of Jacobin ascendancy, even when veiled under the splendid mantle of the Empire ; and Great Britain owes to his strenuous and persevering support much of the glory of the Peninsular war, and not a little of the final triumphs of the grand alliance. But the strength of his intellect was not equal to the brilliancy of his imagination ; the sagacity of his foresight was less powerful than the glow of his ambition. Bent from the very outset upon being the first, conscious of talents second in the end to none, he was at

times little scrupulous about the means of his elevation, and sometimes did not disdain to owe to private fascination or political intrigue what in a free monarchy should be the reward of public greatness.*

Prompted by this infirmity, passionately fond of popularity, he received with favour, after the war was over, the advances of the democratic leaders ; gradually veered round more and more, with the increasing delusion of the age, to liberal principles ; and at length, when the constitution was beset on all sides with dangers, rent asunder the monarchical party by his ambition, and elevated himself to the lead by a dubious alliance with his former opponents, its present enemies. This change is more to be ascribed to the age in which he lived than to himself as an individual ; but it is the characteristic mark of the highest class of intellect and principle to be above the age. Such superiority may be often fatal to present power, but it is the only sure basis for future and enduring fame ; it was not by yielding to the tide that Cato gained immortal renown at Utica. The effects of this change were felt throughout the world. His name was hailed with transport by the discontented and turbulent in every clime ; his judgment yielded to the fascinating influence : he flattered himself he was promoting the national interests, when in fact he was listening to the siren voice

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29.
His faults
and incon-
sistencies.

* Mr Canning's great oratorical powers will never be adequately appreciated except by those who study his speeches, on various occasions, *out of parliament*, especially those to his Liverpool constituents, collected in the edition of his *Memoirs and Speeches*, vi. 319, *et seq.* In them there is much more of the real soul of eloquence, more energy and brevity, more undisguised announcement of principle, and fearless assertion of truth, than in any of his parliamentary orations. It is the same with Sir Robert Peel : none of his speeches in the House of Commons will, as read by posterity, or even by the public without the pale of parliamentary influence, be deemed so fine as some delivered to popular assemblies, particularly that at Merchant Tailors' Hall, in June 1835, and at the Glasgow banquet in January 1837. The reason is obvious, and is the same in both cases. What the world in general, and posterity without exception, look for in oratory, is not so much skilful combating with an adversary, dexterity in eluding difficulties, pointed reference to prior inconsistencies, or home-thrusts at present tergiversations, as vigour of thought, energy of expression, heartfelt vehemence, fearless enunciation of eternal truth. Both these great masters in oratory possess these elevated qualities in a high degree ;

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of individual ambition : he encouraged the insurrection of the South American colonies, but, in so doing, he established a precedent capable of fatal application in future times to his own country ; he boasted that he had “ called a new world into existence,” but the deluge which he raised in his elevation has wellnigh submerged all the landmarks of the old. He first exhibited the perilous example of the union of ministerial power with popular fascination ; and, after spending the best years of his life in successfully combating democratic principles, terminated his career by turning the prow of the state, perhaps unconsciously, right into the gulf of revolution.

30.
Character
of Lord
Castlereagh.

In almost every feature of his character and career, LORD CASTLEREAGH was the reverse of this accomplished statesman ; and the mortal hostility which for a time prevailed between them, was typical of the struggle between those antagonist principles in the British constitution, so soon destined to come into collision, and whose conflict ere long shook the empire to its foundation. Born of a noble and powerful family, he did not, like his brilliant rival, owe his elevation to his own unaided exertions, but was wafted into office and public life with all the advantages of birth and connexions. He was early intrusted with high situations in the Irish government ; and in the important and arduous matter of

but the habits of senatorial debate, and the impression produced in parliament at the moment, by such personal or temporary appeals, is such, that it necessarily withdraws them in some degree, at least on ordinary occasions, from the loftiest flights of eloquence. The most *effective* present debater is by no means, in all cases, the man who will stand highest in the estimation of future ages, if his reputation is rested on his parliamentary efforts alone. The origin and frequent use of that expression in these times, and the high value attached to it in existing contests, is itself an indication of the assumption of a standard for parliamentary force in speaking, different from that commonly recognised, and not understood by the generality of men. But all such fictitious or conventional standards of excellence will be swept away by the floods of time ; and our great statesmen and orators on all sides would do well, while they cultivate this talent, as cultivate it they must for present impression, to anchor their reputation for future ages on the assertion of principles, and the use of expressions of permanent application and universal sway over the human heart.



Sir Tho^s. Lawrence.

T. W. Harland

W. BLACKWOOD & CO.

the Union with England, gave immediate proof of that prompt determination, and undaunted courage, which ultimately shone forth with such lustre on the great theatre of Europe. An indefatigable man of business, thoroughly acquainted with all the details of office in the situations which he successively held, he was gifted with none of the qualities which are calculated to win the favour of a popular assembly, or captivate the imagination of the great body of mankind. His speeches, always distinguished by strong sense, unflinching energy, and lofty feeling, were generally full of matter, and often abounded with vigorous and conclusive arguments. But they wanted the charm of poetic fancy, they were destitute of the force of condensed expression, and seldom rose to the height of impassioned oratory. Hence his influence in the house as a debater was inconsiderable; and though he long held important situations, and commanded, from his qualities as a statesman, the respect even of his enemies, he owed less than any minister of the day to the power of eloquence.

But if the great and ennobling characteristics of a statesman are considered, none in English history will occupy a loftier pedestal, or be deemed worthy of more unqualified admiration. Fixed in his principles, disinterested in his patriotism, unbending in his resolution, he possessed in the highest degree that great quality, without which, in the hour of trial, all others are but as tinkling brass—moral courage and unflinching determination; and they know little of human affairs who are not aware that this is at once the rarest, the most valuable, and the most commanding gift of nature. His courage was not simply that of a soldier who mounts the breach—though none possessed personal bravery in a higher degree—it was that of the general who greatly dares, of the statesman who nobly endures; and this invaluable quality seemed to rise with the circumstances which called for its exercise. His private character was irreproachable; his

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31.
Elevated
features of
his character.

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manners high-bred and elegant ; his heart warm and sincere. Throughout life he was equally observant of his religious duties, and earnest in the practical exemplification of them in deeds of generosity and beneficence. This rare combination of public and private virtues was one great cause of his political influence, and contributed in the most important manner to the national success during the most critical periods of the contest. Conspicuous in the conduct of the Irish government at the time of the Union, it was doubly so during the perils and anxieties of the Peninsular campaigns, and shone forth with the brightest lustre in the crisis of Europe during the invasion of France. By his firmness of character, and yet suavity of manner, he mainly contributed to hold together the sometimes discordant elements of the grand alliance ; by his energy he brought forth the mighty resources of England at the decisive moment, with irresistible force ; and when the resolution of the bravest hearts in Europe was failing under the responsibility of the last throw in the conflict, he nobly stood forth, and by his single efforts mainly brought about the bold determination which hurled Napoleon from his throne. The supporter of rational freedom, he was the resolute opponent of unbridled democracy ; the real friend of the people, he was the unceasing enemy of their excesses ; and while he disdained to purchase popularity by flattering their passions, he risked in their cause the objects to which his life had been devoted, and, alone of all the statesmen of Europe, procured for Poland, amidst the maledictions of the liberals and the delirium of Alexander's victories, a national existence, institutions, and laws—blessings too soon, alas ! torn from them amidst the democratic transports and selfish ambition of later times.*

* See a very interesting Memoir prefixed to the *Castlereagh Despatches*, vol. i. by the present Marquis of Londonderry, the inheritor not less of the chivalrous spirit and patriotism than of the honour and fortune of his illustrious brother.

Cut short in his career before these glorious days arrived, MR PERCEVAL has yet engraven his name deep on the brightest tablets in the annals of England. Born of a noble family, and not merely educated for, but eminent in the practice of the bar, he brought to public affairs the acuteness and precision of legal argument ; and first rose to eminence in parliament by his spirit and perseverance in Opposition during the brief period of Mr Fox's administration, when his party seldom mustered more than twenty or thirty members. But mere intellectual acumen rarely has weight with a mixed assembly ; and in the House of Commons, unless their legal talents are merged in the force of public principle or moral feeling, lawyers have seldom risen to any lasting eminence. It was the great objects of philanthropy for which he contended, which gave Sir Samuel Romilly his well-deserved weight in that assembly and the country ; and it was to a principle of a still dearer interest to humanity that Mr Perceval owed his elevation. He stood forth as the champion of the PROTESTANT FAITH ; and at a crisis when the national heart was violently agitated by the dangers to which, it was thought, the Protestant establishments of the empire were exposed by the concessions then sought to be forced upon the King, he won the public confidence by the intrepidity and energy with which he appealed to the principles which had placed the House of Brunswick on the throne. Called by the favour of his sovereign to occupy a high place in the cabinet on the change of ministry in 1807, he conducted the lead in the House of Commons with a skill and ability which surpassed the expectations even of his friends ; and when the Duke of Portland resigned, and Mr Canning and Lord Castlereagh withdrew, public opinion ratified the royal choice, which placed him at the head of administration.

Without any of the great or commanding qualities of the orator, or the profound views which distinguish the

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32.

Career of
Mr Perce-
val.

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 33.

His charac-
 ter.

highest class of statesmen, Mr Perceval maintained himself successfully in this exalted station, by the integrity of his character, the sincerity of his principles, the acuteness of his reasoning, and the spirit with which he combated the multifarious attacks of his enemies. Reversing the situation of the Roman emperor,* he would by common consent have been deemed unworthy of the lead, if he had not obtained it. Contrary to what is generally the case, he steadily advanced in reputation to the close of life; and possibly his premature end alone prevented him from rising, during the eventful years which immediately followed, to the very highest place among British statesmen. His measures were decided, his spirit resolute, his heart upright. Of unimpeachable integrity in private life, a sincere Christian, a tried patriot, the nation saw without suspicion hundreds of millions pass through his hands, and he justified their confidence by dying poor. He was adverse to all the liberal doctrines of the age, and anchored his faith, perhaps with too unbending rigidity, on the existing constitution in church and state: but time has since proved that the views are not always narrow which are founded on experience, and that the most liberal doctrines are sometimes the most ephemeral. His favourite maxims were, that concession of political power to the Catholics would infallibly lead, step by step, to the overthrow of our Protestant institutions, and that no remedy could be found for the disorders and sufferings of Ireland, but in the establishment of a well-regulated system of poor-laws. Great was the ridicule thrown upon such professions by many of the most learned and all the most liberal men of his time. Subsequent events, however, have in a great degree justified his penetration, and added another to the numerous instances which history affords of the eternal truth, that the only safe foundation for anticipation of the future is experience of the past, and that those who, from adhering

* "Omnium consensu, dignus imperio, nisi regnasset."—TACITUS.

to this principle, are thought to be behind one age, are generally in advance of the next.

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While the vast resources of England, poured forth with a profusion worthy of the occasion, were thus lost to the cause of European freedom by the tardiness with which they were brought into action, and the want of vigour with which they were directed in the field, Austria was anxiously protracting a painful negotiation, and watching every gleam in the political horizon, before she finally put the seal to her degradation. The Emperor retired to Vienna, where he was soon immersed in the cares of his immense empire; while the immediate conduct of the negotiation was committed, at Altenburg in Hungary, to Metternich on the part of Austria, and Talleyrand on that of France. The situation of Napoleon was delicate, particularly in relation to Russia, with which he had repeatedly, during the campaign, short as it was, been on terms bordering on hostility. In particular, the fact of Poniatowski taking possession of the part of Galicia he had conquered, in name of the Emperor Napoleon, excited the utmost jealousy in the breast of Alexander.* But the battle of Wagram had, as if by magic, brought back the cabinet of St Petersburg to its temporising policy, and restored the relations of amity between the two cabinets. When the Emperor Francis, after the conclusion of the armistice, addressed a letter to Alexander, and another to Napoleon, these two sovereigns instantly mutually communicated their despatches and answers to each other. On this side, therefore, no obstacles were to be anticipated; and although there were at first some difficulties, and no small alarm awakened by the proposal, on the part of the French minister, to unite a portion of Galicia

34.
Position of
France in
relation to
Russia at
this period.

* “ ‘Comment se fait-il,’ disait Alexandre, ‘que Poniatowski prenne possession de cette contrée (Galicie) au nom de l’Empereur Napoléon? Il est impossible à la Russie de laisser s’établir une frontière Française sur sa propre frontière.’ ” — *Paroles d’ALEXANDRE*, Juillet 23, 1809; BIGNON, viii. 349.

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¹ Bign. viii.
355, 357.
Hard. x.
469, 472.35.
Negotiation
between
France and
Austria,
July 22.

Aug. 17.

Aug. 19.

to the grand-duchy of Warsaw, which gave instant umbrage to the cabinet and nobles of St Petersburg, yet in the end this difficulty, great as it was, yielded to the thirst for territorial aggrandisement. It was agreed to give Russia a share of the spoil of Galicia; the name of Poland was never again to be revived,* and the Emperor Alexander suffered himself to be persuaded, or affected to believe, that, even with a considerable addition of territory, the grand-duchy of Lithuania could never become an object of jealousy to the Czars of Muscovy.¹†

The cabinet of Vienna, which was stationed at Komorn in Hungary, prolonged the negotiation, from a latent hope that successes in Spain, on the Scheldt, or in the Tyrol, might enable it to resume hostilities with some prospect of success, or obtain some abatement from the rigorous terms which were demanded by the conqueror. These were, the immediate suppression of the landwehr, the reduction of the regular army to one half, the expulsion of all French royalists from the Austrian monarchy, and the cession of all the provinces actually occupied by the French armies. To these extravagant demands, which amounted to a total destruction of the monarchy, Count Metternich opposed the equally extravagant proposition, that everything should be restored to the *statu quo ante bellum*. As the negotiation advanced, Napoleon employed menaces of the severest kind against the Imperial government in the event of his being again driven to hostilities,

* "Toutes les mesures propres à tranquilliser la Russie, sur l'aggrandissement du duché de Varsovie, serait prises. La France garantirait à la Russie ses nouvelles possessions. Enfin, la denomination de Pologne, et des Polonais, serait écartée. Aujourd'hui, Napoleon ne s'approprie rien. Il donna à la Saxe, qui un jour peut changer de politique et s'unir à la Russie. Ce que la Russie acquirat elle se l'incorpore, elle en reçoit une augmentation grande assurée durable."—BIGNON, viii. 353.

† "My interests," said Alexander to Napoleon, "are entirely in the hands of your Majesty. You may give me a certain pledge of your friendship in repeating what you said at Tilsit and Erfurth, on the interests of Russia in connexion with the *late kingdom of Poland*, and which I have since charged my ambassador to confirm."—"Poland," said Napoleon to M. Gorgoli, the officer who bore the despatches to St Petersburg, "may give rise to some embarrassment

boasted much of his perfect intelligence with the Emperor Alexander, and even dropped some significant hints of his intention, if driven to extremities, to separate the three crowns which now centred on the Imperial brows, and bestow two of them on the Archdukes Charles and John. Meanwhile, the utmost care was taken to improve the military position of the army, and make everything ready for a resumption of hostilities. Magnificent reviews daily took place at Vienna; troops were incessantly forwarded from the rear to the corps in front; a grand distribution of honours and gratuities to the soldiers was made on the anniversary of the Emperor's birth-day on the 15th of August, accompanied by a decree for the erection of a column of Cherbourg granite, on the Pont Neuf at Paris, a hundred and eighty feet high, with the inscription, "Napoleon to the French people;" a vast fortress was commenced at Spitz, opposite to Vienna, and another at Raab, to serve as impregnable *têtes-du-pont* for the passage of the Danube; while, by a decree equally agreeable to the French as grievous to the German people, it was declared that, till the 11th April following, the whole expenses of the Grand Army should be laid upon the conquered territories.¹

But, in the midst of all his magnificent preparations and dazzling announcements, the Emperor had several causes for disquietude, and was far from feeling that confidence in his position which he declared to the world,

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Aug. 11.
1 Pel. iv.
344, 357.
Sav. iv.
140, 148.
Bign. viii.
355, 361.

36.
Napoleon's
secret rea-
sons for dis-
quietude.

betwixt us; but the world is large enough to afford us room to arrange ourselves." — "If the re-establishment of Poland is to be brought on the tapis," replied Alexander, "*the world is not large enough*; for I desire nothing further in it." The excitement was prodigious at St Petersburg; and it was openly said in some circles that it would be better to die sword in hand, or assassinate the Emperor, if he was disposed to yield, than to permit the reunion of Galicia to the grand-duchy. Napoleon was not ignorant of these alarming symptoms; and it was at length agreed that France should guarantee to Russia its new possessions, that the name of Poland and the Poles should be avoided, and three-fourths of the spoils of Galicia given to the grand-duchy, and one-fourth to Russia. Under a new name, and the sway of the King of Saxony, this was thought not likely to awaken any dangerous ideas as to the re-establishment of Poland.—See BIGNON, viii. 351, 354.

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and held forth in his conferences with Metternich. The Walcheren expedition kept all the Flemish provinces for some weeks in a state of suspense ; and there was good reason to believe that, if Antwerp had fallen, the fermentation in the north of Germany would have drawn Prussia into an open declaration of war, which would at once have revived a desperate and doubtful contest on the Danube. The Tyrol was still in arms, and had a third time totally defeated the French invaders, and made the greater part of their number prisoners. Nor were the accounts from Spain of a more encouraging description. The disaster of Soult at Oporto, to be immediately noticed, had been followed by the invasion of Estremadura and the defeat of Talavera ; while, at the same time, accounts were daily received of the discord among the generals employed in the Peninsula ; and the details of an extensive conspiracy in Soult's army revealed the alarming truth that the Republican generals, like the Roman consuls, dazzled by the thrones which had been won by some of their number, were not altogether beyond the reach of intrigues which might elevate them from a marshal's baton to a king's sceptre. " It is necessary," said Napoleon, " to hasten at any price to make peace, in order that the enemy may not gain time to profit by his machinations."¹

¹ Pel. iv.
345, 346.
Hard. x.
470, 471.

37.
Stabs's at-
tempt to
assassinate
him.

Sept. 15.

The Emperor's desire to bring the long-protracted negotiations to a conclusion was increased by a singular attempt at assassination which was at this period made upon his person. At the daily parades at Schönbrunn, the attention of the guards and officers of his household had been more than once attracted by a young man, who threw himself in the way, and importunately demanded to be allowed to speak to the Emperor. On the third occasion, one of the gendarmes seized him rudely by the neck to move him back, and, in doing so, perceived that he had something concealed in his bosom. He was searched ; and it proved to be a large knife, sheathed in

a number of sheets of paper. Being immediately apprehended and brought before Savary, the chief of the *gendarmérie*, for examination, he at once avowed that his intention was to have taken the Emperor's life ; alleging as a reason, that he had been assured that the sovereigns would never make peace with him, and that, as he was the stronger, the grand object of universal pacification could never be attained till he were removed. It turned out that he was the son of a Protestant minister at Erfurth, and only eighteen years old. He had seen the Emperor when he was at that town the year before ; and he admitted that he had borrowed his father's horse, without his knowledge, and come to Vienna to execute his purpose. "I had chiefly studied history," said he, "and often envied Joan of Arc, because she had delivered France from the yoke of its enemies ; and I wished to follow her example."¹

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¹ Sav. iv.
141. Pel.
iv. 371.

"The guards who surrounded me," said the Emperor, "would have cut you in pieces before you could have struck me!"—"I was well aware of that," replied he, "but I was not afraid to die."—"If I set you at liberty," said Napoleon, "would you return to your parents, and abandon your purpose?"—"Yes," replied he, "if we had peace ; but, if war continued, I would still put it in execution." Struck with these answers, the Emperor, with a magnanimity which formed at times a remarkable feature in his character, was desirous of saving his life ; and directed Dr Corvesart, who was in attendance, to feel his pulse, to see if he was in his sound senses. The physician reported that his pulse was slightly agitated, but that he was in perfect health. The young fanatic was sent to prison at Vienna ; and though the Emperor for some time entertained thoughts of pardoning him, he was forgotten in the pressure of more important events ; and, after Napoleon's departure for Paris, he was brought before a military council, condemned, and executed.² He evinced on the scaffold the same intrepidity

38.
Who is
condemned
and execut-
ed.² Sav. iv.
141, 145.
Pel. iv. 371.
Bign. viii.
371, 373.

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39.
Which leads
to the con-
clusion of
the negotia-
tion.

which had distinguished his conduct when examined before Napoleon, and his last words were, "For God and the Fatherland!"*

This singular event contributed as much, on the French side, to the conclusion of the negotiations, as the failure of the Walcheren expedition did on that of the Austrian cabinet. There might be more characters in Germany like Stabs: in a country so profoundly agitated, and containing, especially in its northern provinces, so many enthusiastic spirits, it was impossible to measure the personal danger which the Emperor might run, if hostilities were resumed. These considerations weighed powerfully with the cabinet at Schönbrunn. Napoleon gradually fell in his demands; and though the orders given were abundantly warlike, and the marshals were all at their posts, yet it was evident to those in the secret of the negotiations, that matters were approaching to an accommodation. The demand, on the part of France, of the line from the Danube to the Lake Aller, as the frontier towards Bavaria, gave rise to fresh difficulties at the very moment when all seemed concluded; for it deprived Austria on that side of the mountain ridge which formed its true frontier, and gave the court of Munich the crest of the Hansruck, and part of the slope towards the eastward. But matters had gone too far to recede: the cabinet of Vienna was true to its principle of yielding when it could no longer resist; and Prince Lichtenstein, with tears in his eyes, signed the treaty,¹ on the part

¹ Bign. viii.
360, 365.
Pel. iv. 370,
373. Bour.
vii. 247, 256.

* An adventure of a different character befell Napoleon at Schönbrunn during this period. A young Austrian lady of attractive person and noble family, fell so desperately in love with the *renown* of the Emperor, that she became willing to sacrifice to him her person, and was by her own desire introduced at night into his apartment. Though abundantly warm in his temperament, so far as physical enjoyments were concerned, and noways disquieted in the general case by any lingering qualms of conscience about Josephine, Napoleon was so much struck with the artless simplicity of this poor girl's mind, and the devoted character of her passion, that, after some conversation, he had her reconducted untouched to her own house.—See CONSTANT, *Mémoires de Napoleon*, iv. 236.

of the Austrian government, at Vienna, on the 14th October.

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1809.

40.
Peace of
Vienna.

By the peace of Vienna, Austria lost territories containing three millions and a half of inhabitants. She ceded to Bavaria the Inn-Viertel, and the Hansrueck-Viertel, as well as Salzburg, with its adjacent territory, and the valley of Berchtolsgraden—districts, the importance of which was not to be measured by their extent and population, but by the importance of their situation, lying on the ridge of mountains which separated the two monarchies, and taking a strong frontier from the one to bestow it upon the other. Portions of Galicia, to the extent of fifteen hundred thousand souls, were ceded to the grand-duchy of Warsaw, and of four hundred thousand to Russia: and, besides this, the grand-duchy acquired the fortress and whole circle of Zamosc, in the eastern part of the same province. To the kingdom of Italy, Austria ceded Carniola, the circle of Villach in Carinthia, six districts of Croatia, Fiume and its territory on the sea-shore, Trieste, the county of Gorici, Montefalcone, Austrian Istria, Cartua and its dependent isles, the Thalweg of the Save, and the lordship of Radzuns in the Grisons. In addition to these immense sacrifices, the Emperor of Austria renounced, on the part of his brother, the Archduke Antony, the office of grand-master of the Teutonic Order, with all the rights and territories belonging to it. The Tyrol remained to its Bavarian masters; but the Emperor Francis stipulated for his brave and devoted children in that province an absolute and unconditional amnesty, as well in their persons as their effects.¹

¹ See Treaty in Martens, iv. 618. Pel. iv. 468. Ann. Reg. 1809. App. to Chron. 733. State Papers.

In addition to these public articles, various secret ones were annexed to the treaty, of a kind still more humiliating to the house of Hapsburg. The treaty was, in the first place, declared common to Russia; next, the Emperor of Austria engaged to reduce his army, so that it should not exceed a hundred and fifty thousand men

41.
Its secret
articles.

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during the continuance of the maritime war ; all persons born in France, Belgium, Piedmont, or the Venetian states, were to be dismissed from the Austrian service ; and a contribution of 85,000,000 francs (£3,400,000) was imposed on the provinces occupied by the French troops. By a letter of Napoleon to M. Daru, the intendant-general of the army and conquered provinces, it was specially enjoined that "from the 1st April to the 1st October, every farthing expended on the army should be drawn from the conquered provinces, and all the advances between these periods made from France, restored to the public treasury."¹ The funds from which this immense spoliation was to be drawn, were "the funds of all the countries occupied in Germany, and the contributions of the countries conquered since the breaking out of the new war ;" and, from the same sources, magnificent rewards were decreed to the troops in every grade, from the marshal to the drummer. Five hundred francs were given to each child of a common soldier who had fallen, whom the Emperor called his "adopted children," and 2000 francs (£80) to the children of officers. The pension of a private soldier who had suffered amputation was augmented to 500 francs or £20 annually.¹

¹ Bign. viii.
379, 380.
15th Aug.
1809.

42.
Jealousy of
Russia at
the increase
of the grand-
duchy from
this treaty.

The treaty of Vienna was received with marked disapprobation by the cabinet of St Petersburg ; and it was attended with a most important effect in widening the breach which already existed between the two mighty rulers of continental Europe. In vain Napoleon assured Alexander that he had watched over his interests as he would have done over his own ; the Russian autocrat could perceive no traces of that consideration in the dangerous augmentation of the territory and population of the grand-duchy of Warsaw, and he openly testified to Caulaincourt his displeasure, referring to the date of his dismissal of General Gortschakoff for decisive evidence of the sincerity of his alliance.² In the midst of all his

² *Ante*, ch.
lviii. § 61.

* See Appendix, A, Chap. LX.

indignation, however, he made no scruple in accepting the portion of the spoils of Austria allotted as his share ; and M. de St Julian, who was despatched from Vienna to persuade him to renounce that acquisition, found it impossible to induce the cabinet of St Petersburg to take to itself the sterile honours of disinterestedness. Napoleon, however, spared no efforts to appease the Czar ; and being well aware that it was the secret dread of the restoration of Poland which was the spring of all his uneasiness, he engaged not only to concur with Alexander in everything which should tend to efface ancient recollections, but even declared that he “ was desirous that the name of Poland and of the Poles *should disappear, not merely from every political transaction, but even from history.*” How fortunate that the eternal records of history are beyond the reach of the potentates who for a time oppress mankind !¹

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¹ Champagny to Alexander, Oct. 20, 1809. Bign. viii. 390.

Napoleon afterwards reproached himself at St Helena, with not having, at the treaty of Vienna, divided the three crowns of the Austrian empire, and thereby for ever prostrated its power and independence : and it is certain that, at one period of the negotiation, he not only threatened to adopt this extreme measure, but entertained serious intentions of carrying it into execution. His secret thoughts seem to have been divulged in a despatch to his minister for foreign affairs, of 15th September, in which he openly avows that his desire is either to separate the three crowns, or to form a sincere and durable alliance with the Austrian empire. Provided he could obtain a sufficient guarantee for that alliance, he was willing to leave the monarchy entire ; but he thought there could be no security for it unless the throne were ceded to the Grand-duke of Würzburg.* The Emperor

43.
Napoleon's secret views in this treaty.

* “ I desire nothing from Austria,” said Napoleon. “ Galicia is beyond my limits ; Trieste is good for nothing but to be destroyed, since I have Venice. It is a matter of indifference to me whether Bavaria has a million more or less ; my true interest is *either to separate the three crowns, or to contract an intimate*

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1809.

¹ O'Meara,
ii. 199. Las
Cases, iii.
139. Bign.
viii. 364,
368.

Francis magnanimously agreed to the sacrifice, if it could have the effect of preserving the integrity of the monarchy ; but it was not afterwards insisted on by Napoleon, who began, in the course of this negotiation, to conceive the idea of connecting himself with the Cæsars in a way still more personally flattering, and likely to be more politically enduring. In truth, he foresaw that a rupture with Russia was inevitable at some future period ; it was with the Czar that the real battle for supreme dominion was to be fought ; and he clearly perceived the policy of not weakening too far the power which would form his right wing in the conflict.¹

44.
The ram-
parts of
Vienna
blown up.
Oct. 17.

No sooner was the treaty of Vienna ratified than Napoleon set out for Paris, and arrived at Fontainebleau on the 26th of October. Before leaving the Austrian capital, however, in the interval between the signature and ratification of the treaty, he gave orders for the barbarous and unnecessary act of blowing up its fortifications. Mines had previously been constructed under the principal bastions ; and the successive explosion of one after another, presented one of the most sublime and moving spectacles of the whole Revolutionary war. The ramparts, slowly raised in the air, suddenly swelled, and, bursting like so many volcanoes, scattered volumes of flame and smoke into the air ; showers of stones and fragments of masonry fell on all sides. The subterraneous fire ran along the mines with a smothered roar, which froze every heart

alliance with the reigning family. The separation of the three crowns is only to be obtained by resuming hostilities ; an intimate alliance with the existing Emperor is difficult, because I have not entire confidence in his resolution." "I said to Prince Lichtenstein the other day: Let the Emperor cede the crown to the Grand-duke of Würzburg, I will restore everything to Austria without exacting anything. M. de Bubna took me at my word, and said the Emperor was far from having any repugnance to such a sacrifice. I said I would accept it: that the base put forward at Altenburg was far from being unsusceptible of modifications. Insinuate to Count Metternich that if the Emperor is, on any account, inclined to cede the throne, (report says he is weary of royalty,) I will leave the monarchy entire. With the Grand-duke I will contract such an alliance as will speedily enable me to settle the affairs of the Continent: I have confidence in the character and good disposition of the Grand-duke: I would consider the repose of the world as secured by that event. You may

with terror ; one after another, the bastions were heaved up and exploded, till the city was enveloped on all sides by ruins, and the rattle of the falling masses broke the awful stillness of the capital. This cruel devastation produced the most profound impression at Vienna ; it exasperated the people more than the loss of half the monarchy would have done. These ramparts were the glory of the citizens ; shaded by trees, they formed delightful public walks ; they were associated with the most heart-stirring eras of their history ; they had withstood all the assaults of the Turks, and been witness to the heroism of Maria Theresa. To destroy these venerable monuments of former glory, not in the fury of assault, not under the pressure of necessity, but in cold blood, after peace had been signed, and when the invaders were preparing to withdraw, was justly felt as a wanton and unjustifiable act of military oppression. It brought the bitterness of conquest home to every man's breast : the iron had pierced into the soul of the nation.* As a measure of military precaution it seemed unnecessary, when these walls had twice proved unable to arrest the invader ; as a preliminary to the cordial alliance which Napoleon desired, it was in the highest degree impolitic ; it was wholly uncalled for, as it was perpetrated *after* the signature of the preliminaries of peace ; and its effects were felt by Napoleon, in the hour of his adversity, with

say I can rely on the moral probity of the Emperor, but then he is always of the opinion of the last person who speaks ; such men as Stadion and Baldacci will continue to exercise influence over him. That way of arranging matters would suit me well."—*NAPOLÉON to CHAMPAGNY, 15th Sept. 1809 ; BIGNON, viii. 365–368.*

* An eye-witness, M. Bignon, gives the following account of this wanton act of barbarity :—"Du haut du chateau imperial, je contemplais l'action de la mine, et ses redoutables effets. Les remparts, soulevés en l'air et gonflés comme des montagnes, s'ouvraient en volcan, d'où jaillissaient des masses des feux et des torrents des pierres. La marche et le progrès de cette explosion, sur une ligne extrêmement étendue, formaient le plus terrible, et peut-être le plus magnifique des spectacles. Le jour suivant, toute la population de Vienne visita ces vastes ruines. On pouvait remarquer sur le visage d'un grand nombre d'habitants l'empreinte de la douleur et d'un vif ressentiment."—*BIGNON, viii. 375.*

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¹ *Jom.* ii.
314, 315.
Bign. viii.
375, 376.

terrible bitterness. The important lesson which it has left to the world, is the clear proof which it affords of that great general's opinion of the vital importance of central fortifications: he has told us himself, that, if Vienna could have held out three days longer, the fate of the campaign would have been changed: but, while this truth is perhaps the lesson of all others most strongly illustrated by the events of the war, it is the last which the vanity of kings, and the thoughtlessness of the people, will permit to be read to any useful effect.¹

45.
Affairs of
the Tyrol
after the
armistice
of Znaym.

² *Ante*, ch.
lviii. § 49.

July 12.

While the cabinet of Vienna was thus yielding in the strife, and the last flames of this terrible conflagration were expiring on the banks of the Danube, the Tyrol continued the theatre of a desperate conflict, and the shepherds of the Alps, with mournful heroism, maintained their independence against a power which the Austrian monarchy had been unable to withstand. Having completely delivered their country, after the battle of Aspern, from the invaders, and spread themselves over the adjoining provinces of Bavaria, the Vorarlberg, and Italy,² the brave mountaineers flattered themselves that their perils were over, and that a second victory on the Danube would speedily reunite them by indissoluble bonds to their beloved Emperor. Kufstein was besieged and on the point of surrendering, when the news of the battle of Wagram and the armistice of Znaym fell like a thunderbolt on their minds. Many of the insurgents, as was natural in such circumstances, gave up the cause as lost, and retired in deep dejection to their homes; while others, more resolute or desperate, redoubled in ardour, and seemed determined to shed the last drop of their blood rather than submit to the hated yoke of Bavaria. The chiefs of the insurrection, and the Austrian generals, who had again entered the country, were at first in a state of great perplexity, from uncertainty whether to yield to the summons of the French generals, who required them to

evacuate the country, or the prayers of the inhabitants, who besought them to stand by them and defend it. The uncertainty of the soldiers, however, was removed by an order which arrived after the armistice of Znaym, for them to evacuate both the Tyrol and the Vorarlberg, which they immediately prepared to obey. But the insurgents refused to acknowledge the convention, and declared they would submit to nothing but direct orders from the Emperor of Austria, who, they were confident, would never issue such commands, as he had promised to conclude no peace which did not secure to him the possession of the Tyrol. Such was the fury of the people, that some of the most violent proposed to seize and disarm all the Austrian troops, and put the whole prisoners to death. And although Hormayer, Martin, and the real chiefs, did their utmost to calm the general effervescence and direct it to some useful object, yet they could not prevent many of the prisoners from falling victims to the ungovernable rage of the peasantry. In the midst of this heroic yet savage bewilderment, the general voice turned to Hofer; and his announcement, in a crowded assembly, that he would stand by them to the last drop of his blood, though it were only as chief of the peasants of the Passeyrthal, was answered by a general shout, which proclaimed him "commander-in-chief of the province so long as it pleased God."¹

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

July 21.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 521,
530. Barth.
276, 280.

Dangers, however of the most formidable kind were fast accumulating round the devoted province. The armistice of Znaym enabled Napoleon to detach overwhelming forces against the Tyrol; and he immediately set about the final reduction of the country. Marshal Lefebvre, at the head of twenty thousand men, renewed his invasion of the Innthal by the route of Salzburg; while Beaumont, with ten thousand, crossed the ridge of Scharnitz, and threatened Innsbruck from the northern side. Both irruptions proved successful. In the confusion produced by the withdrawing of the Austrian

46.
Fresh invasion of the Tyrol by Marshal Lefebvre.
July 20.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

July 21.

July 29.

July 30.
1 Gesch. A.
Hofer, 334,
342. Barth.
280, 290.

47.
Renewed
resolution
of the
Tyrolese
to continue
the contest.

authorities, and uncertainty whether or not the war was to be continued, the frontier defiles were left unguarded, and both columns of the enemy appeared without opposition before the steeples of Innsbruck. The Archduke John and General Buol, who commanded the Austrian troops, successively issued proclamations to the people, announcing to them the conclusion of the armistice and stipulated evacuation of the Tyrol, and recommending them to lay down their arms, and trust to the clemency of the Duke of Dantzic. Finding the peasants little inclined to follow their directions, Hormayer and Buol evacuated the capital with all the regular troops and cannon, taking the route over the Brenner, leaving the Tyrol to its fate. Innsbruck, destitute of defenders, immediately submitted, and the spectacle of thirty thousand French and Bavarians in possession of its chief city, naturally spread the belief that the war in the Tyrol was terminated.¹

This, however, was very far from being the case ; and Europe, amidst the consternation produced by the battle of Wagram, was speedily roused to the highest pitch of enthusiasm by the unconquerable resolution and astonishing victories of its gallant mountaineers. General Hormayer, who was well aware of the influence of Hofer over his countrymen, and despaired with reason of any further success in the contest, had used the utmost efforts to induce that renowned chief to follow him in his retreat. But all his efforts were ineffectual. Many of the chiefs, including even the resolute Spechbacher, had resolved to withdraw with the Austrian generals ; but when he went to take leave of Hofer, the power of patriotic eloquence proved irresistible, and he was prevailed on to remain and stand by his country to the last. Even after this acquisition, however, that renowned chief was still the victim of contending feelings : patriotic ardour impelling him one way, and the obvious hopelessness of the attempt another. In the

agony of indecision he retired to a hermitage in the valley of Passeyr, where, amidst pines and rocks, he spent several days in solitude and prayer. Haspinger was equally undecided; and meanwhile the peasants, who were full of ardour and ready on all sides to take up arms, remained inactive for want of a leader to direct them. At length, however, the latter courageous chief had a meeting at Brixen with Martin Schenk, Peter Kemmater, and Peter Mayer; at which Schenk, who was the friend and confidant of Hofer, produced a letter from him, in which he implored them to make "one more effort on behalf of their beloved country." These rural heroes mutually pledged themselves to sacrifice their lives rather than abandon the holy cause; and, having concerted measures, Haspinger took the command of the peasants, while Hofer, who was summoned by the Duke of Dantzic to appear at Innspruck, on the 11th of August, returned for answer, "He would come, but it should be attended by ten thousand sharpshooters."¹

CHAP.
LX.1809.
July 29.

Aug. 2.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 345,
359. Barth.
294, 302.

Hostilities commenced on the 4th of August by an attack on the advanced guard of the French and Bavarians, who were descending the southern declivity of the Brenner, on the banks of the Eisach, between Sterzing and Brixen. The Tyrolese, under Haspinger, occupied the overhanging woods and cliffs which surrounded the bridge of Laditch, a little below Mittewald, where the high-road from Bolsano to Innspruck crosses the Eisach. The French and Bavarians, little suspecting their danger, advanced incautiously down the defile. The woods were silent—no muskets or armed men appeared on the cliffs: but no sooner was a considerable body of the enemy, under General Rouyer, engaged in the defile, than a heavy fire burst forth on all sides; and, from amidst the leafy screen, the deadly bullets of the sharpshooters carried death with every discharge into the allied ranks. The column halted, fearful to advance, yet unwilling to

48.
Desperate
action at
the bridge
of Laditch.
Aug. 4.Atlas,
Plate 24.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

recede; upon which the Tyrolese, with deafening shouts, burst forth from their concealment, and, mingling with the enemy, a frightful slaughter took place. Fresh troops, however, came up from the rear; courageous discipline prevailed over unskilled valour; and the Bavarian column pushed on towards the bridge. Suddenly a crackling sound was heard; a rattle of falling stones startled the horsemen in advance, and immediately afterwards huge masses of rock and heaps of rubbish on the heights above, which had been propped by several gigantic firs, came thundering down, and crushed whole squadrons and companies at once. So awful was the crash, so complete the devastation, that both parties for a time suspended the conflict, and, amidst the death-like silence which ensued, the roar of the Eisach was distinctly heard.* Undeterred, however, by this frightful catastrophe, the French advanced through a murderous fire, and, surmounting the ruins which obstructed the road and covered the bodies of their comrades, forced their way on to the bridge. Already, however, it was on fire: a Bavarian horseman attempted, with dauntless intrepidity, to cross the arch amidst the flames, but the burning rafters gave way, and he was precipitated into the torrent. Separated by the yawning gulf, over which there was no other passage, both parties desisted from the combat. Haspinger returned to Brixen to collect his scattered forces; and Rouyer, weakened by the loss of twelve hundred men, remeasured his steps to Mitte-wald and Sterzing, at the foot of the Brenner.¹†

¹ *Gesch. A. Hofer*, 560, 561. *Barth.* 304, 312.

* A parallel disaster, in similar circumstances, befell the soldiers of Alexander. "Ariobarzanes has cum 25,000 peditum occupaverat, rupes abscissas, et undique præruptas, in quarum cacuminibus extra teli jactum barbari stabant, de industriâ quieti, et paventibus similes; donec in arctissimas fauces penetraret agmen. Quod ubi contemptu sui pergere vident; tum vero ingentis magnitudinis saxa per montium prona devolvunt; quæ, incussa sæpius subjacentibus petris, majore vi incidebant, nec singulos modo, sed agmina proterebant. Nec stare ergo, nec niti, nec testudine quidem protegi poterant, quum tantæ molis onera propellerent barbari. Nec aliud remedium erat, quam reverti quâ venerant."—*QUINTUS CURTIUS*, lib. v. c. 3.

† The scene of this memorable conflict is on the high-road from Brixen to

The successful issue of this extraordinary conflict produced, as might have been expected, a general outbreak in the Tyrol. Hofer descended the valley of Passcyr at the head of several thousand men, and joined Spechbacher on the Jaufen, the mountain ridge which overhangs, on the west and north, the northern slope of the Brenner, and ten thousand men soon flocked to their standard. The Bavarians, under General Steingel, made several attempts to dislodge them from this threatening position, which menaced the great road by Brixen to Italy, but they were constantly repulsed. COUNT WITTGENSTEIN, an officer destined to immortal celebrity in a more glorious war, succeeded, however, in again clearing of the enemy the road up the northern slope of the Brenner; and Marshal Lefebvre, encouraged by this success, put himself at the head of his whole corps, with the intention of forcing his way over that elevated ridge to the Italian Tyrol. But he had not advanced far till his column, while winding in straggling files up the steep ascent, twenty miles in length, which leads to the summit of the pass, was beset on all sides. When the vanguard had reached Steinach, it was attacked in numberless points at once by the peasantry, and thrown down in disorder on the main body, which ere long fell into confusion. After an obstinate conflict, the whole, twenty thousand strong, were routed and driven back with immense loss to the bottom of the mountain. Such was the disorder, that the marshal himself arrived there disguised as a common trooper, on the evening of the

CHAP.
LX.1809.
49.Defeat of
Marshal
Lefebvre on
the Brenner.
Aug. 4.

Aug. 5, 6.

Aug. 10.

Sterzing, about a mile below Mittewald, shortly before it crosses the bridge of Laditch. Every traveller from Italy to Germany, by the Tyrol, passes through it; but how few are aware of the heart-stirring deeds of which the wood-clad precipices, beneath which they roll in their carriages, have been the theatre! Sir Walter Scott places the action in the Upper Innthal, but this is a mistake.—See *Geschichte* ANDREAS HOFER, 560. The author visited the scene in 1816, and he yet recollects, in all its vividness, the thrilling interest which it excited: the long black furrow produced by the falling masses, like the track of an avalanche, was even then, after the lapse of seven years, imperfectly obliterated by the bursting vegetation which the warmth of the Italian sun had awakened on these beautiful steep.

CHAP. 11th; and his followers—horse, foot, and cannon,
 LX. mingled together—were rolled down in utter rout into
 1809. Innsbruck. Twenty-five pieces of cannon, and the
 whole ammunition of the army, fell into the hands of
 Aug. 11. the victors, who, gathering strength like a mountain
¹ Gesch. A. torrent with every tributary stream which crossed their
 Hofer, 361, course, soon appeared in great force on Mount Ysel and
 367. Barth. the heights which overhang the capital.¹
 324, 330. Pel. iv. 358.

50. Similar success in other quarters attended the efforts
 50. of the Tyrolese patriots. A body of seventeen hundred
 Successes men, who advanced from Landek through the Vintsch-
 in other gau, with the intention of falling on the rear of Hofer's
 quarters. people at Sterzing, was met at Prutz by a body of
 Aug. 8. Tyrolese sharpshooters, and, after a protracted contest of
 two days, totally defeated, with the loss of three hundred
 killed and nine hundred prisoners. At the same time
 General Rusca, in the Pusterthal, marched with six
 thousand men from Carinthia to Lienz, where he per-
 petrated the most revolting atrocities, massacring every
 human being, of what everage or sex, that fell in his way.
 Aug. 9. At length a stop was put to his career by a body of
 armed peasants, who met him at the Lienzerclause, and
 after a bloody conflict drove him back, with the loss of
 twelve hundred men, to Sachsenburg; from which, hotly
 pursued with increasing fury by the peasantry, he retreated
 across the frontier into Carinthia, so that the whole of
 the Pusterthal was delivered from the enemy. At the
 Aug. 10. same time a body of Italian troops, which had advanced
 from the neighbourhood of Verona with the design of
 co-operating with the corps of Lefebvre in its descent
 from the Brenner, alarmed at the general insurrection
 of the valley of the Adige, fell back, harassed by a
 cloud of peasants, to the Italian frontier, and the whole
 of the southern Tyrol was restored to the arms of the
 Tyrolese.²

Animated by these unlooked-for successes, the patriots
 no longer stood on the defensive, but, flocking from all

² Gesch. A.
 Hofer, 566,
 567. Barth.
 330, 334.

quarters to the standard of Hofer, assembled in great multitudes on Mount Ysel, the scene of their former triumphs, and destined to be immortalised by a still more extraordinary victory. Lefebvre had collected his whole force, consisting of twenty-five thousand men, of whom two thousand were horse, with forty pieces of cannon, on the little plain which lies between Innspruck and the foot of the mountains on the right bank of the Inn. They were far from being animated, however, by their wonted spirit; the repeated defeats they had experienced had inspired them with that mysterious dread of the mountaineers with which regular troops are sometimes seized, when, contrary to expectation, they have been worsted by bodies of men undisciplined. A secret feeling of the injustice of their cause, and the heroism with which they had been resisted, paralysed many an arm which had never trembled before a regular enemy. The Tyrolese consisted of eighteen thousand men, three hundred of whom were Austrian soldiers who had refused to follow their officers, and remained to share the fate of the inhabitants: they were tolerably supplied with ammunition, but had few provisions, in consequence of which several hundred peasants had already gone back to their homes. Spechbacher commanded the right wing, whose line extended from the heights of Passberg to the bridge between Hall and Volders; Hofer was with the centre, and had his headquarters at the inn of Spade, on the Schönberg; Haspinger directed the left, and advanced by Mutters. At four in the morning, the brave Capuchin roused Hofer from sleep, and, having first united with him in fervent prayer, hurried out to communicate his orders to the outposts. The battle commenced at six, and continued without intermission till midnight; the Bavarians constantly endeavouring to drive the Tyrolese from their position on Mount Ysel, and they, in their turn, to force the enemy back into the town of Innspruck. For long the contest was undecided, — the superior discipline and

CHAP.
LX.

1809.
51.

Total defeat
of Lefebvre
at Inns-
pruck.
Aug. 12.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

admirable artillery of the enemy prevailing over the impetuous but disorderly assaults and deadly aim of the mountaineers. But towards nightfall, the bridge of the Sill was carried after a desperate struggle; and their left flank being thus turned, the French and Bavarians gave way on all sides, and were pursued with great slaughter into the town. The Bavarians lost six thousand men, of whom seventeen hundred wounded fell into the hands of the Tyrolese; while, on the side of the latter, not more than nine hundred had fallen.¹

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 372,
376. Barth.
336, 342.
Pel. iv. 338.

52.
Hofer's go-
vernment of
the Tyrol.
Aug. 15.

This great victory was immediately followed by the liberation of the whole Tyrol. Lefebvre fell back across the Inn on the day after the battle, and, evacuating Innspruck, retreated rapidly to Kufstein, and from thence to Salzburg, where his whole army was collected on the 20th. Spechbacher followed with a large body of peasants, and destroyed a considerable part of the rearguard at Schwatz; while Hofer made his triumphant entry into Innspruck, and took up his residence in the Imperial castle, where his presence was very necessary to check the disorders consequent on the irruption of so large a body of tumultuous patriots into an opulent city. The entire command of the country was now assumed by this chief. Proclamations were issued, and coins struck in his name, as commander-in-chief of the Tyrol; and the whole civil and military preparations were submitted to his directions. While exercising these exalted functions, however, he still retained the simplicity of his rustic dress and manners: he wore nothing but his country jerkin and clouted shoes; his long beard was retained, but his broad-brimmed hat was exchanged for one with a plume, and bearing an inscription to him as commander-in-chief of the Tyrol, the gift of the holy sisterhood of Innspruck.²

² Gesch. A.
Hofer, 376,
390. Barth.
346, 350.

It soon appeared, however, that their renowned chief was not qualified for the duties of government. He interfered in an irregular and capricious way, though from pure motives, with the administration of justice, and was

more occupied with terminating the private quarrels of his countrymen than warding off their public dangers. Among other attempts, he spent much time in endeavouring to reconcile the disputes of married persons — an undertaking which gave him ample employment. Meanwhile, Eisensticken and Sieberer, who had both distinguished themselves in the commencement of the war, but had subsequently retired with the Austrian troops, returned to their countrymen to share at all hazards their fate: the former bore a gold medal and chain, which were presented to Hofer by the Emperor of Austria, and with which he was formally invested in the great church of Innsbruck, at the foot of the tomb of Maximilian, by the abbot of Wilten, amidst the tears and acclamations of a vast concourse of spectators; while two deputies, Muller and Schonecher, who contrived to elude the vigilance of the French sentinels who surrounded the country, and made their way to England to implore the aid of the British government, were received with heartfelt kindness by all classes, and filled the nation, and through it the world, with unbounded admiration of their countrymen's exploits.¹

But darker days were approaching; and the Tyrolese war was destined to add another to the numerous proofs which history affords, that no amount of patriotism, however great, and no prodigies of valour, however marvellous, not even when aided by the enthusiasm of religion and the strength of mountains, can successfully maintain a protracted resistance against a numerous and well-conducted enemy, if destitute of the organisation and support of a regular government. Popular enthusiasm, often irresistible in the outset, and while the general effervescence lasts, is incapable of the steady and enduring efforts necessary in combating the forces of an established monarchy ably and perseveringly directed. Like the French Vendéans, or the Scotch Highlanders in 1745, the Tyrolese for the most part returned home after the

CHAP.
LX.1809.
53.Faults of
his govern-
ment.

Sept. 28.

Oct. 4.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 376,
405, Barth.
346, 360.

54.

Prepara-
tions of
Napoleon
for the sub-
jugation of
the Tyrol.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

Oct. 10.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 405.
408. Thib.
vii. 410. Pel.
iv. 480.

victory of Innsbruck. In their simplicity they thought the contest was over, now that the invaders were again chased from the valley of the Inn ; and thus the frontier passes were left guarded only by a few hundred men, wholly inadequate to protect them against the assaults of the enemy. Meanwhile Napoleon, now thoroughly roused, and justly apprehensive of the fatal blow which the continued independence of this mountainous district in the midst of his dominions would inflict on his power, was preparing such immense forces for a renewed attack on the country, as rendered its subjugation a matter of certainty. In the south, General Peyri, at the head of ten thousand men, received orders to advance from Verona, and make himself master of Trent at all hazards ; Rusca was intrusted with the command of three divisions, eighteen thousand strong, which were to enter the Pusterthal from Villach and Carinthia ; while three Bavarian divisions, under Drouet, mustering twenty thousand veterans, were to break in by the pass of Strub and the Salzburg frontier. These great forces were the more to be dreaded, that they would arrive simultaneously in the country at the very moment when all hearts were frozen by the intelligence of the conclusion of a treaty of peace by Austria, in which the Tyrol was abandoned ; and when the first appearance of the winter snows was driving the peasants and their herds from the elevated pastures in the mountains to the lower valleys, in which they might be more easily reached by the invading columns.¹

55.
Successful
invasion of
the country
on all sides.

Oct. 17.

Under such difficult and disheartening circumstances, it was hardly to be expected, and certainly not to be wished, that the resistance of the Tyrolese should be further protracted ; but such was the unconquerable spirit of the people, that for three months longer they continued obstinately to contend for their independence. Their frontiers were in the first instance forced on all sides : Peyri defeated a body of Tyrolese and Austrians at Ampezzo on the Adige, and, after making himself master of

Trent and Roveredo, advanced to the celebrated position of Lavis, from whence the peasants were driven with great loss. On the northern and eastern frontiers affairs were equally discouraging. Spechbacher, who occupied the important pass of Strub, the only entrance from the Salzburg territory, with a few hundred peasants, was unexpectedly attacked at daybreak on the 18th October, and defeated with considerable loss; and, what to him was a heart-rending misfortune, his little son Andrew, a boy of eleven years of age, who had escaped from his place of seclusion in the mountains to join his father in the field, was made prisoner fighting by his side.* Spechbacher himself was struck down, desperately wounded, and only made his escape by the assistance of his brave friends, who, fighting the whole way, carried him up the almost inaccessible cliffs on the side of the pass, where the Bavarian soldiers could not follow them. The invaders now inundated the valley of the Inn: Hofer, almost deserted by his followers, was unable to maintain himself at Innspruck, but retiring to Mount Ysel, the scene of his former victories, still maintained with mournful resolution the standard of independence.¹

CHAP.
LX.
1809.

Oct. 18.

Oct. 24.
¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 409,
416. Barth.
374, 380.

Eugene Beauharnais, who was intrusted with the direction of all the invading columns, now issued a proclamation from Villach, in which, after announcing the conclusion of peace between France and Austria, he called on the people to submit, and offered them, on that

* Spechbacher was struck down by repeated blows with the but-end of a musket, and, when he regained his feet, he found his little son had been carried off from his side. Wounded and bleeding as he was, he no sooner discovered his loss than he called on his followers to return to the rescue; but, for the first time in the war, they refused to follow him. Little Andrew was told his father was dead; and, to convince him that he was so, the Bavarian soldiers produced his sabre and some part of his dress, all bloody, which had been lost in the struggle. On seeing them he wept bitterly, but soon regained his composure, and marched in sullen silence with his fellow-prisoners. At Munich, he was presented to the King of Bavaria, who treated him with much kindness, and placed him in the royal seminary. In after times, and under happier auspices, this heroic family were reunited, under their beloved Emperor's sway.—See BARTHOLDY, *der Krieg der Tyroler Landleute, im Jahre 1809*, p. 378, 379.

- CHAP. condition, an unrestricted amnesty for the past. At the
 LX. same time the Archduke John, in a proclamation, strongly
 1809. counselled them to relinquish the contest, and with a
 56. heavy heart announced that no further aid or countenance
 Hofer at first resolves to submit, but afterwards re-
 sumes the contest.
 Oct. 29. General Drouet, offering to stop hostilities; and a few
 Nov. 8. days after issued a proclamation, in which he counselled
 the people, as peace had been concluded, to lay down
 their arms, and trust "for pardon and oblivion of the
 past to the greatness of soul of Napoleon, whose footsteps
 were guided by a power of a superior order, which it was
 no longer permitted them to resist." But, in a few days
 after, finding that the inhabitants of his beloved valleys
 were still in arms, and that further resistance was resolved
 on, he issued another proclamation, in which he ascribed
 his former intention to the advice of evil counsellors, and
 called on the people "still to combat in defence of your
 native country. I shall fight with you, and for you, as a
 father for his children." War was then resumed in every
 quarter; but the forces brought from all sides against the
 Tyrol were so immense that no hope remained to the
 inhabitants, except that of throwing, by deeds of glory, a
 last radiance round their fall.¹
- Rusca and Baraguay d'Hilliers entered the Pusterthal
 from Carinthia, with twenty thousand men, in the begin-
 ning of November. Unable to resist so overwhelming a
 force, the Tyrolese fell back, fighting all the way, to the
 Mûlbacher-clause, which they made good for two days
 with the most determined bravery, and were only com-
 pelled to evacuate it on the third, from their position being
 turned by a circuitous path through the mountains. All
 the principal valleys were now inundated by French
 troops. Brixen was occupied; and the Bavarians from
 Innsbruck having surmounted the Brenner with little
 opposition, the victorious columns united at Sterzing, and
- 1 Gesch. A.
 Hofer, 424,
 436. Barth.
 382, 384.
 Thib. vii.
 411.
57.
 Last inva-
 sion of the
 Tyrol, and
 desperate
 resistance.
- Nov. 3.
- Nov. 6.

with fifteen thousand men threatened the Passeyrthal from the eastward; while an equal force, under Peyri, ascended the banks of the Adige, and approached the only district remaining in arms by the southern side. Thus the insurrection was at last cooped up within very narrow limits, and, in fact, confined to Hofer's native valley. But though assailed by forces so immense, and driven by the snow in the higher grounds down to the banks of the Adige, the peasants still showed an undaunted front; and Rusca having incautiously advanced to the old castle of the Tyrol, and dispersed part of his forces to obtain the delivery of arms from the inhabitants, he was attacked by Haspinger, aided by Thalgueter and Trogger, two rustic leaders, and totally defeated, with the loss of six hundred killed and wounded, and seventeen hundred prisoners. Thalgueter fell in this action, at the very moment he was taking an eagle from the enemy.¹

CHAP.
LX.
1809.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 436,
444. Barth.
384, 386.

This unexpected success again set the whole neighbouring valleys in a flame; but the storms of winter having set in, and the mountains become covered with their snowy mantle, want of provisions compelled the inhabitants to submit. The natives of those elevated regions, who maintain themselves by the produce of the dairy or the sale of their manufactures, were ruined by the exactions of the contending armies, and beheld with despair their families threatened with famine by the burning of their houses by the French soldiers, and stoppage of the wonted supplies of grain from the Italian plains. Before the middle of December, almost all the chiefs had taken advantage of an amnesty, pressed with generous earnestness upon the people by Eugene Beauharnais and Baraguay d'Hilliers, and joined a large party of Tyrolese emigrants at Waradein, while the peasants, in sullen grief, returned to their homes.²

58.
Final conquest of the country.

² Gesch. A.
Hofer, 436,
452. Barth.]
385, 390.
Thib. vii.
412.

Animated by the respect of true soldiers for a gallant adversary, both these brave generals were unwearied in their efforts to induce Hofer to submit; and they would

CHAP.
LX.1809.
59.Betrayal
and seizure
of Hofer.

have done anything to extricate him from his perilous situation. But, though grievously depressed and perplexed, he refused to accompany his friends in their flight, or humble himself by submission to the conquerors. Retiring to his native valley, he long eluded the search of the victors. His place of concealment was a solitary alpine hut, four leagues distant from his home, in general inaccessible from the snow which surrounded it. In that deep solitude he was furnished, by stealth, with provisions by a few faithful followers, and more than once visited by secret messengers from the Emperor of Austria, who in vain used every entreaty to induce him to abandon the Tyrol, and accept an asylum in the Imperial dominions. But Hofer steadily refused all their offers, declaring his resolution to be fixed never to abandon his country or family. He even resisted all their entreaties to shave his beard, or use any disguise which might prevent his person from being known to the enemy. At length he was seized by a French force of sixteen hundred men, led by Donay, once his intimate friend, whom the magnitude of the reward induced to betray his benefactor. Two thousand more were in readiness to support them. A single man had put a brigade in motion. The column set out at midnight, and, after marching four leagues over ice and snow, surrounded the hut at five in the morning of the 5th January. No sooner did Hofer hear the voice of the officer inquiring for him than he quietly came to the door, and delivered himself up. He was immediately bound, and marched down his beloved valley, amidst the tears of the inhabitants and the shouts of the French soldiers, to Bolsano; and thence by Trent to Mantua.¹

Jan. 5, 1810.

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 446,
450. Barth.
396, 400.

60.

His trial
and condem-
nation.

On his journey he was treated by the French officers, and particularly General Baraguay d'Hilliers, with the kindness which true valour ever pays to misfortune, and which, in his case, was well deserved by the efforts he had uniformly made to protect the French prisoners who fell into his hands. On his arrival at Mantua, a court-

martial was immediately summoned, with General Bisson, the governor of the fortress, whom he had formerly vanquished, at its head, to try him for combating against the French after the last proclamation of Eugene Beauharnais offering a general amnesty. The proceedings were very short, as the facts charged were at once admitted by the accused; but, notwithstanding this, a very great difference of opinion prevailed as to the punishment to be inflicted. A majority were for confinement; two had the courage to vote for his entire deliverance: but a telegraphic despatch from Milan, conveying the orders of Napoleon, decided the question, by ordering his death within twenty-four hours, thus putting it out of the power of Austria to interfere. He received his sentence with unshaken firmness, though he had no idea previously that his life was endangered; and only requested that he might be attended by a confessor, which was immediately complied with. By this priest, Manifesti, who never quitted him till his death, he transmitted his last adieus to his family, and gave him everything he possessed to be delivered to his countrymen, consisting of five hundred florins in Austrian bank-notes, his silver snuff-box and beautiful rosary, which he had constantly carried about with him. In the intervals of religious duty, he conversed eagerly about the Tyrolese war, expressing always his firm conviction that sooner or later his countrymen would be reunited to the Austrian government.¹

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 446,
451. Barth.
396.

On the following morning he was led out to execution. As he passed by the barracks on the Porta Molina, where the Tyrolese prisoners were confined, they fell on their knees and wept aloud. Those who were near enough to approach his escort, threw themselves on the ground and implored his blessing. This he freely gave them, requesting their forgiveness for the misfortunes in which he had involved their country, and assuring them that he felt confident they would ere long return under the dominion of their beloved Emperor, to whom he cried

61.
His execu-
tion.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

out his last "*Vivat !*" with a clear and steady voice. On the broad bastion, a little distance from the Porta Ceresa, the grenadiers formed a square, open in the rear, while twelve men and a corporal stood forth with loaded pieces. A drummer offered Hofer a white handkerchief to bandage his eyes, and requested him to kneel ; but this he refused, saying that "he was used to stand upright before his Creator, and in that posture he would deliver up his spirit to him." Having then presented the corporal who commanded the detachment with his whole remaining property, consisting of twenty kreutzers, and uttered a few words expressive of attachment to his sovereign and country, he faced the guard, and with a loud voice pronounced the word "*Fire !*" On the first discharge he sank only on one knee : a merciful shot, however, at length despatched him.¹

¹ Gesch. A.
Hofer, 453,
456. Inglis's
Tyrol, ii.
223, 224.

62.
Reflections
on this
event.

Few events in the history of Napoleon have cast a darker stain on his memory than this ungenerous slaughter of a brave and heroic antagonist. Admitting that the unutterable miseries of civil war sometimes render it indispensable for the laws of all countries to punish with death even the most elevated virtue, when enlisted on the side which ultimately is vanquished, it can hardly be said that the resistance of the Tyrolese to the Bavarian yoke partook of that character. It was truly a national contest. The object in view was not to rise up in rebellion against a constituted government, but to restore a lost province to the Austrian monarchy. The people had been forcibly transferred, only a few years before, against their will, from the sway of their beloved Emperor to the rude oppression of a foreign throne ; the dominion of four years could not obliterate the recollections of four centuries. In that very war Napoleon had himself issued a proclamation, calling upon the Hungarians to throw off their allegiance to Austria, and re-assert, after its extinction for centuries, their national independence.*

* "Hungarians ! the moment has arrived to claim your independence. I

Hofer had never sworn allegiance to the French Emperor; he had never held office under his government, nor tasted of his bounty; yet what invectives have Napoleon and his panegyrists heaped upon the Bourbons in 1815, for visiting with severity the defection of the leaders of the French army, during the Hundred Days, who had done both! If Ney was murdered, because, after swearing to bring back Napoleon in an iron cage, vanquished by old recollections, he gave the example, himself a marshal at the head of an army, of deserting the sovereign who had elevated him to its command; what are we to say of Hofer, a simple mountaineer, who, without employment or command under Bavaria, merely strove to restore his country to the recollections and the ties of four centuries? Even if his life had been clearly forfeited by the laws of war, a generous foe, won by his bravery, penetrated with his devotion, would only have seen in that circumstance an additional reason for sealing the glories of Wagram by an act of mercy, which would have won every noble bosom to his cause. But though not destitute of humane emotions, Napoleon was steeled against every sentiment which had the semblance even of militating against reasons of state policy; and such was the force of his selfish feelings, that he was actuated by an indelible rancour towards all who in any degree thwarted his ambition. The execution of Hofer was the work of the same spirit which, carrying its hostility beyond the grave, bequeathed a legacy to the assassin who had attempted the life of Wellington.

Peter Mayer, having been tried at Bolsano, was also

offer you peace, the integrity of your territory, of your liberty, and constitution. Your alliance with Austria has been the cause of all your misfortunes; you form the largest portion of its empire, and yet your dearest interests have always been sacrificed to those of the Hereditary States. Resume, then, your rank as an independent nation; choose a king who may permanently reside amongst you, who may be surrounded only by your citizens and soldiers. Hungarians! that is what Europe demands, what I offer you."—*NAPOLÉON'S Proclamation to the Hungarians, Vienna, 13th May 1809; SCHOELL, Hist. des Trait. ix. 245.*

CHAP.
LX.1809.
63.Adventures
of Haspin-
ger and
Spech-
bacher.

shot, and behaved with equal heroism in his last moments. Haspinger, who put no faith either in the promises of pardon held out by Eugene, or the visions of celestial succour declared by Kolb, a fanatic who was mainly instrumental in exciting the last unhappy insurrection, succeeded, after a very long time, in escaping into Switzerland, by the way of St Gall and Einsiedeln, in the dress of a monk, from whence he contrived, by cross paths through Friuli and Carinthia, to reach Vienna, where he received protection from the Emperor. Spechbacher, after the unfortunate action at the pass of Strub, where his son Andrew was made prisoner, was actively pursued by the Bavarians, who set a large price upon his head; and he was frequently obliged to shift his place of concealment to avoid discovery. He was at one time surrounded in a retreat by a party of Bavarian soldiers, who had been led to his house by a faithless wretch; but he escaped upon the roof, and, leaping thence, made his way into an adjoining forest, where he was secreted nearly a month, and endured the utmost pangs of hunger. Wandering in this manner, he by accident met his wife and infant children, like him flying from persecution and death, and perishing of want and cold. They at length obtained a refuge in the house of a generous peasant, in the village of Volderberg, where they were concealed together several weeks. But his retreat having been discovered, Spechbacher was obliged to fly to the higher mountains, where, on one of the summits of the Eise-gletscherr, in a cavern discovered by him in former times when pursuing the chamois, he lay for several weeks in the depth of winter, supported by salt provisions, eaten raw, lest the smoke of a fire should betray his place of concealment to his pursuers.¹

¹Barth. 438,
450. Inglis's
Tyrol, ii.
227, 230.

Happening one day, in the beginning of March, to walk to the entrance for a few minutes to enjoy the ascending sun, an avalanche, descending from the summit of the mountain above, swept him along with it down to

the distance of half a mile on the slope beneath, and dislocated his hip-bone in the fall. Unable now to stand, surrounded by ice and snow, tracked on every side by ruthless pursuers, his situation was to all appearance desperate; but even then the unconquerable energy of his mind, and incorruptible fidelity of his friends, saved him from destruction. Summoning up all his courage, he contrived to drag himself along the snow for several leagues during the night, to a friend's house in the village of Volderberg, where, to avoid discovery, he crept into the stable. His faithful friend gave him a kind reception, and carried him on his back to Rinn, where his wife and children were, and where his devoted domestic, George Zoppel, concealed him in a hole in the cow-house beneath where the cattle stood, though beyond the reach of their feet, where he was covered up with cow-dung and fodder, and remained for two months, till his leg was set and he was able to walk. The town was full of Bavarian troops; but this extraordinary place of concealment was never discovered, even when the Bavarian dragoons, as was very frequently the case, were in the stable looking after their horses. Zoppel did not even inform Spechbacher's wife of her husband's return, lest her emotion or visits to the place should betray his place of concealment. At length, in the beginning of May, the Bavarian soldiers having left the house, Spechbacher was lifted from his living grave, and restored to his wife and children. As soon as he was able to walk he set out, and journeying chiefly in the night, through the wildest and most secluded Alps, by Dux and the sources of the Salza, he passed the Styrian Alps, where he crossed the frontier and reached Vienna in safety. There he was soon after joined by his wife and children; and the Emperor's bounty provided both for them and Hofer's orphan family, with not undeserved munificence, till, on the restoration of the Tyrol to the house of Hapsburg, they returned to their native valleys, and Spechbacher died at Hall, in 1830,

CHAP.
LX.1809.
64.Extraordi-
nary adven-
tures and
escape of
the latter.

CHAP.
LX.

1809.

¹ Barth. 438,
474. Inglis,
Tyrol, ii.
227, 236.

of a weakness in the chest, brought on by these unparalleled hardships. Little Andrew, then a man, who had been kindly treated at the court of Munich, was promoted to an official situation in the Tyrol, under the Austrian government; but the widow and children of Hofer remained under their father's roof in the valley of Passeyr.¹

65.
Affairs of
the Holy
See. Original causes of
discontent
on the part
of the Pope
at Napoleon.

Touching as is this record of simple virtue in the mountaineers of the Tyrol, another event of still more surpassing interest, and attended by yet more momentous consequences, occurred in this eventful year. This was the dethronement and imprisonment of the Pope, and the annexation of the patrimony of St Peter and of the Eternal City to the French empire.

When Pius VII., contrary to the usage of his predecessors, agreed to leave the Quirinal Hill and cross the Alps in the depth of winter, to place the crown on the brows of the French Emperor, he naturally expected that some great and durable benefit would accrue to himself and his successors from the unwonted act of condescension. The flattering reception which he met with at Paris, the delicate attentions of all the functionaries of the imperial palace, and the marked regard of the Emperor himself, confirmed these flattering illusions; and the papal suite returned into Italy charmed with their visit, and never doubting that, at the very least, the restoration of the three legations in Romagna, torn from the Holy See by the treaty of Tolentino in 1797, might with confidence be relied on.² M. Fontanes, the orator of government, had enlarged, in eloquent and touching terms, on the magnificent spectacle afforded by the reconversion of the first of European states to the Christian and Catholic faith. "When the conqueror of Marengo," said he, "conceived on the field of battle the design of re-establishing the unity of religion, and restoring to the French their ancient worship, he rescued civilisation from impen-

² *Ante*, ch.
xx. § 152.

ding ruin. Day for ever memorable! dear alike to the wisdom of the statesman and the faith of the Christian! It was then that France, abjuring the greatest errors, gave the most useful lesson to the world. She recognised the eternal truth, that irreligious ideas are impolitic, and that every attempt against Christianity is a stroke levelled at the best interests of humanity. Universal homage is due to the august pontiff who, renewing the virtues of the apostolic age, has consecrated the new destinies of the French empire, and clothed it with the lustre of the days of Clovis and Pepin. Everything has changed around the Catholic faith, but it remains the same! It beholds the rise and fall of empires; but amidst their ruins, equally as their grandeur, it sees the working out of the divine administration. Never did the universe witness such a spectacle as is now exhibited: the days are past when the empire and the papacy were rival powers. Cordially united, they now go hand in hand to arrest the fatal doctrines which have menaced Europe with a total subversion: may they yield to the combined influence of religion and wisdom!"¹

¹ Artaud,
Hist. de
Pius VII. i.
509, and
504.

It is not surprising that such a reception from the conqueror who had filled the world with his renown, and such a prospect of reconverting to its pristine faith the first of the European monarchies, should have dazzled the eyes not only of the Pope but of the whole conclave. But amidst the universal illusion, it did not escape, even at that time, the observation of some of the able statesmen who directed the cabinet of Rome, that, flattering as these attentions and expressions were, they were all general, and bore reference only to the *spiritual* extension of the papal sway. Ardently as some temporal advantages were desired, both the Emperor and his diplomatists had carefully avoided holding out any pledge, even the most indirect, of such concessions. Of this a painful proof was soon afforded. Shortly after his return to Rome, Pius VII. transmitted a memorial to Napoleon, in which

66.
The Pope's
request for
the restoration
of the legations is
refused.

- CHAP. he enumerated the losses which the Holy See had sus-
 LX. tained from the French government during the progress
 1805. of the war, and strongly urged him to imitate the example
 Feb. 26, of Charlemagne, and restore all its possessions. It
 1805. was no part of the system of Napoleon to permit the
 imperial eagles to recede from any territory which they
 March 11. had once occupied; and in a studied answer drawn up
 by the Emperor himself, while he expressed boundless
 anxiety for the spiritual exaltation of the Holy See, and
 even admitted a desire, "if the occasion should offer,"
 to augment its temporal advantages; yet he distinctly
 announced that this must not be expected from any inter-
 ference with existing arrangements, or diminution of the
 territory of the kingdom of Italy, to which these acqui-
 sitions had been annexed. Repeated attempts were
 afterwards made by the Papal government to obtain
 some relaxation or concession in this particular; but they
 were always either eluded or met by a direct refusal.¹
- ¹ Pope Pius VII. to Nap. Feb. 21; and Nap. to Pius VII. March 11, 1805. Artaud, ii. 25, 33.
67. Still more decisive events speedily demonstrated that,
 Further en- amidst all Napoleon's professions of regard, which he
 croachments really felt, for the spiritual authority of the successors of
 of France St Peter, he had no intention of adding to their terri-
 on the Holy torial influence, or of treating them in any other way
 See. than as his own vassals, who, in every part of their tem-
 poral administration, were to take the law from the
 cabinet of the Tuileries. In October 1805, during the
 course of the Austrian war, the French troops seized upon
 Ancona, the most important fortress in the ecclesiastical
 dominions; and the remonstrances of the Pope against
 this violent invasion were not only entirely disregarded, but
 Napoleon, in reply, openly asserted the principle that he
 was Emperor of Rome, and the Pope was only his vice-
 roy.* The haughty and disdainful terms of this letter,
- Nov. 13, 1805.
- Feb. 13, 1806.

* "All Italy must be subjected to my law: your situation requires that you should pay me the same respect in temporal which I do you in spiritual matters. I will not *infringe on the independence of the Holy See*, but my enemies must be yours. Your holiness must cease to have any delicacy towards my

and the announcement of an undisguised sovereignty over the Roman states, first opened the eyes of the benevolent Pontiff to the real intentions of the French Emperor: he returned an intrepid answer to the conqueror of Austerlitz, that he recognised no earthly potentate as his superior; * and from that hour may be dated the hostility which grew up betwixt them. Napoleon, so far from relaxing in any of his demands, was only the more aroused, by this unexpected opposition, to increased exactions from the Holy See: his troops spread over the whole papal territory; Rome itself was surrounded by his battalions; and, within a half mile of the Quirinal palace, preparations were openly made for the siege of Gaeta.¹

CHAP.
LX.

1806.

March 12,
1806.¹ Artaud, ii.
141. Bign.
vii. 137.

Pius VII., however, was unshaken in his determination. "If they choose," said he to M. Alquier, the French envoy, "to seize upon Rome, we shall make no resistance; but we shall refuse them the entry to the castle of St Angelo. All the important points of our dominions have been successively occupied by their troops, and the collectors of our taxes can no longer levy any imposts in the greater part of our territory, to provide for the contributions which have been imposed. We shall make no resistance, but your soldiers will require to burst open the gates with cannon-shot. Europe shall see how we are treated; and we shall at least prove that we have acted in conformity to our honour and our conscience.² If they take away our life, the tomb will do us

68.
Unshaken
firmness of
the Pope.
June 11,
1806.² M. Al-
quier's Let-
ter, June 13,
1806. Ar-
taud, ii. 141,
142; and
Bign. vii.
137, 148.

enemies and those of the church. *You are Sovereign of Rome, but I am its Emperor*: all my enemies must be its enemies; no Sardinian, English, Russian, or Swedish envoy can be permitted to reside at your capital."—NAPOLEON to PIUS VII., 13th Feb. 1806; ARTAUD, ii. 113-118; BIGNON, vii. 137.

* "Your Majesty," said Pius VII., "lays it down as a fundamental principle, that you are sovereign of Rome: the Supreme Pontiff recognises no such authority, nor any power superior in temporal matters to his own. There is no Emperor of Rome: it was not thus that Charlemagne treated our predecessors. The demand to dismiss the envoys of Russia, England, and Sweden, is positively refused: the Father of the Faithful is bound to remain at peace with all, without distinction of Catholics or heretics."—PIUS VII. to NAPOLEON, 12th March 1806; ARTAUD, ii. 121, 128.

CHAP. LX. honour, and we shall be justified in the eyes of God and man."

1806.
69.
Further demands of France, and refusal of the Pope.

July 8,
1806.

¹ Artaud, ii.
147, 151.
Bign. vii.
167.

70.
Renewed mutual irritations after the peace of Tilsit.

The French minister soon after intimated, that if the Pope continued on any terms with the enemies of France, the Emperor would be under the necessity of detaching the duchy of Urbino, the march of Ancona, and the sea-coast of Civita Vecchia, from the ecclesiastical territories; but that he would greatly prefer remaining on amicable terms with his holiness; and with that view he proposed, as the basis of a definitive arrangement between the two governments—1. "That the ports of his holiness should be closed to the British flag, on all occasions when England was at war with France. 2. That the papal fortresses should be occupied by the French troops, on all occasions when a foreign land force is debarked on *or menaces* the coasts of Italy." To these proposals, which amounted to a complete surrender of the shadow even of independence, the Pope returned a respectful but firm refusal, which concluded with these words:—"His Majesty may, whenever he pleases, execute his menaces, and take from us whatever we possess. We are resigned to everything, and shall never be so rash as to attempt resistance. Should he desire it, we shall instantly retire to a convent, or the catacombs of Rome, like the first successors of St Peter: but let him not think, as long as we are intrusted with the responsibility of power, to make us by menaces violate its duties."¹

The overwhelming interest of the campaign of Jena and Eylau, for a time diverted the attention of Napoleon from the affairs of Italy; but no sooner was he relieved by the peace of Tilsit from the weight of the Russian war, than he renewed his attempts to break down the resistance of the ecclesiastical government, and was peculiarly indignant at some hints which he had heard, that the Pope, if driven to extremities, might possibly launch against his head the thunders of the Vatican. A fresh negotiation was nevertheless opened; Napoleon

insisting that the court of Rome should rigidly enforce the Berlin and Milan decrees in its dominions, shut its ports against the English flag, as well as that of Turkey, at that period in alliance with England, permit and maintain a permanent French garrison at Ancona, and allow the march of French columns through its territories. In the event of refusal to comply with these conditions, the threat of the incorporation of the Papal states with France was distinctly held out.* The Pope expressed his readiness to accede to these propositions, and to submit to their immediate execution, except the actual declaration of war against England. But the Emperor had other designs; and mere adherence to the Continental System was far from being now sufficient. On the 2d February 1808, a large body of French troops entered Rome, which thereafter continued to be occupied by their battalions. The formidable force with which he was surrounded, had no effect in subduing the courage of the intrepid pontiff. Calling in M. Alquier on the day of their arrival, he thus addressed him: "The Emperor insists on everything, or nothing: you know to what articles proposed I will consent: I cannot subscribe the others. There shall be no military resistance: I shall retire into the castle of St Angelo: not a shot shall be fired; but the Emperor will find it necessary to force its gates. I shall place myself at the entry; the troops will require to pass over my body; and the universe will know that he has trampled under foot him whom the Almighty has anointed. God will do the rest."¹†

CHAP.
LX.1807.
Oct. 11,
1807.Feb. 2,
1808.¹ Letter of
M. Alquier,
Jan. 29,
1808. Bign.
vii. 170,
176. Ar-
taud, ii.
178, 180.

* "C'est l'intérêt de l'humanité, c'est la voix de soixante millions d'hommes, qui crie, 'Forcez l'Angleterre à vivre en paix avec nous, à nous rendre nos ports, nos vaisseaux, nos relations maritimes et commerciales.' Si seul sur le Continent le Pape voulait rester attaché à cette puissance, le devoir du chef de l'empire ne serait-il pas de réunir immédiatement à ces états la partie de ses domaines qui s'en isole par politique, et d'annuler la dotation du Charlemagne, dont il a fait une arme contre son successeur."—CHAMPAGNY *au Nonce* CARDINAL CAPRARA, *Sept.* 21, 1807; BIGNON, vii. 146.

† "What!" said Napoleon, in a confidential letter to Eugene Beauharnais at that period, "does Pius VII. imagine that the crown has not rights as sacred

CHAP.
LX.1808.
71.Entire as-
sumption of
the govern-
ment by the
French.
April 2.
March 16.

Feb. 13.

April 2.
i Bign. vii.
172, 179,
181. Artaud,
ii. 179, 182.

Insults and injuries continued to be heaped upon the head of the devoted Pontiff. The French troops did not, indeed, blow open the gates of the Quirinal palace; but the entire government of his dominions was taken from him. Soon after Signor Cavalcini, the Papal governor of Rome, an intrepid man, was seized and carried off by the French troops, and the military government of the capital was confided to General Miollis; the Papal troops were informed, in a letter from Eugene Beauharnais, that he "congratulated them upon their emancipation from the rule of priests; that the Italian soldiers are now commanded by men who can lead them into fire; and that they are no longer obliged to receive their orders from women or monks." Champagny officially intimated to the Papal government, "that the French troops would remain at Rome until the holy father had consented to join the general league, offensive and defensive, with Napoleon and the King of Naples. That condition is the *sine quâ non* of the propositions of the empire." While by an imperial decree shortly after, the provinces of Urbino, Ancona, Macerata, and Camerino, about a third of the ecclesiastical territories, were declared to be irrevocably united to the kingdom of Italy.¹

Violent as these aggressions were, they were but the prelude to others still more serious. The Pope was confined a prisoner in his own palace. French guards occu-

as those of the tiara? There were kings before there were popes. There is a mistake of a thousand years in his proceedings. What does he mean by his threats of denouncing me to Christendom? Does he mean to excommunicate me? Does he suppose the arms will fall from the hands of my soldiers? Would he put a poniard in the hands of my people to murder me? The Pope has taken the trouble to come to Paris to crown me; in that step I recognise the spirit of a true prelate; but he expected in return to get the three legations from the kingdom of Italy; but that I would not consent to. The Pope at present is too powerful: priests are not made to govern. The rights of the tiara consist only in humiliation and prayer. I hold my crown from God and my people: I will always be Charlemagne to the court of Rome, and never Louis Debonnaire. Jesus Christ has not instituted a pilgrimage to Rome, as Mahomet has to Mecca."—*Confidential Letter*, NAPOLEON to EUGENE, 22d July 1807; ARTAUD, ii. 166, 167; and BIGNON, vii. 159, 160.

pied all parts of the capital ; the administration of posts, the control of the press, were assumed by French authorities ; the taxes were levied for their behoof, and those imposed by the Papal government of its own authority annulled ; the Papal troops were incorporated with the French, and the Roman officers dismissed. The pontiff continued, under these multiplied injuries, to evince the same patience and resignation ; firmly protesting, both to Napoleon and the other European powers, against these usurpations, but making no attempt to resist them, and sedulously enjoining both his clergy and people to obey the intruded authority without opposition. CARDINAL PACCA, who was appointed secretary of state on the 18th June, was a prelate of powerful abilities, and of that intrepid and discerning character, which, disdaining all minor methods of resistance, aimed at bringing the great contest between the throne and the tiara at once to an issue on the most advantageous ground. He became, on this account, in an especial manner obnoxious to the Emperor ; and an attempt having been made by the French officers to carry him off and banish him from Rome, in order to detach the Pope from his energetic and manly councils, his holiness, with great expressions of indignation, took him into his own apartments. They were more successful, however, in their attempt on Cardinal Antonelli, who was on the same day arrested by a sergeant and eight grenadiers, and instantly sent out of the ecclesiastical territories ; while a cordon of sentinels was stationed round the Quirinal, and no one allowed to pass out or in without being strictly examined. The head of the faithful was no longer anything but a prisoner in his own palace. But all Napoleon's efforts to overcome his constancy were unavailing. More courageous and better advised than the Bourbon princes of Spain, the venerable pontiff remained proof alike against the menaces and the wiles of the French authorities ;¹ no resignation could be extorted from him ; and, without ever crossing the threshold of his

CHAP.
LX.1808.
72.

Fresh outrages, and confinement of the Pope to his palace.

June 18.

Sept. 6.

¹ Cardinal Pacca, i. 347, 351. Artaud, ii. 196, 202. Bign. vii. 183, 189.

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LX.

1809.

apartments, he calmly awaited the decree which was to consign him to destruction. He warned the Emperor, however, of the necessity to which he would ere long be subjected, of employing the spiritual arms with which God had invested him in defence of the Holy See.*

73.
Annexa-
tion of
the Roman
states to the
French em-
pire. Ex-
communica-
tion of Na-
poleon.
June 10,
1809.

The last act of violence at length arrived. On the 17th May 1809, a decree was issued from the French camp at Schönbrunn, which declared "that the states of the Pope are united to the French empire: the city of Rome, so interesting from its recollections, and the first seat of Christianity, is declared an imperial and free city;" and proclaimed that these changes should take effect on the 1st June following. On the 10th June, this decree was announced by the discharge of artillery from the castle of St Angelo, and the hoisting of the tricolor flag on its walls, in the place of the venerable pontifical standard. "Consummatum est!" exclaimed Cardinal Pacca and the Pope at the same instant; and immediately, having obtained a copy of the decree, which the dethroned pontiff read with calmness, he authorised the publication of a BULL of EXCOMMUNICATION against Napoleon and all concerned in this spoliation, which, in anticipation of such an event, had been some time before prepared by the secret council of the Vatican. Early on the following morning, this bull was affixed on all the usual places, particularly on the churches of St Peter's, Santa Maria Maggiore, and St John, with such secrecy as to be accomplished without the knowledge or suspicion of the police. It was torn down as soon as discovered, and taken to General Miollis, who forthwith forwarded it to the Emperor at his camp at Vienna. The Pope expressed great anxiety, that care should be taken to conceal the persons engaged in printing and affixing on the churches this bull,¹ as certain death awaited them if they were

¹ Artaud, ii.
202, 209.
See Bull in
Pacca, i.
355, 372.
Bign. viii.
279.

* "Vous abusez de la force en foulant à vos pieds les devoirs le plus saints, surtout au préjudice de l'église. Vous nous obligerez ainsi à faire, dans l'humilité de notre cœur, usage de cette force que le Dieu tout-puissant a mise dans nos mains."—*Bulle du Pape, March 7, 1808*; BIGNON, vii. 186.

discovered by the French authorities ; but he had no fears whatever for himself. On the contrary, he not only signed it with his name, but had transcribed the whole document, which was of great length, with his own hand, lest any other person should be involved, by the handwriting being detected, in the vengeance of the French Emperor.

Napoleon was not prepared for so vigorous an act on the part of the council of the Vatican. He received accounts of it at Vienna, shortly before the battle of Wagram, and immediately resolved on the most decisive measures. For long he had meditated the transference of the seat of the popedom to Paris, and the acquisition to his authority of the immense influence to be derived from a personal control over the head of the Church. He had been much struck by an expression of the Emperor Alexander at Erfurth : " I experience no difficulty in affairs of religion : I am the head of my own church."¹ Deeming it impossible, however, in modern Europe, to accomplish such a union directly, or place the pontifical tiara openly on the same brows as the Emperor's crown, he conceived the design of accomplishing the object indirectly, by procuring the transference of the residence of the Pope to Paris, and the incorporation of all his possessions with the imperial dominions ; so that, both by reason of local position and entire dependence for income, he should be under the influence of the French Emperor. By this policy, which in his view was truly a master-stroke, he hoped to do more than could have been accomplished by the entire extinction of the papal authority. He did not design the destruction of a rival power, but the addition of its influence to himself ;

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LX.
1809.

74.
Views of
Napoleon in
regard to
the Pope,
and his
transference
to Paris.

¹ Artaud, ii.
170.

* " By keeping the Pope at Paris," said Napoleon, " and annexing the Roman states to my dominions, I had obtained the important object of separating his temporal from his spiritual authority ; and, having done so, I would have elevated him beyond measure. I would have surrounded him with pomp and homage ; I would have made him cease to regret his temporal authority ; I would have rendered him an idol : *he should have had his residence near my person.* Paris would have become the capital of the Christian world : *I would*

CHAP.
LX.

1809.
1 Cardinal
Pacca, ii. 14.
15. Nap. in
Las Cases,
v. 262. Bot.
iv. 347, 348.
Bign. viii.
281.

while the annexation of the ecclesiastical states to the French empire in effect rendered his sway irresistible over all parts of the Italian peninsula. He never could tolerate the sway which the Church of Rome arrogated to itself over the minds of men, leaving, as he said, only their carcasses to temporal power. But he was a clear advocate for that sway, provided he obtained the means of directing it.¹*

75.
Arrest of
the Pope
by Radet,
July 5.

Accidental circumstances, however, precipitated matters more quickly than Napoleon intended, and gave him possession of the person of the Pope within a few days after the publication of the bull of excommunication. Measures of the utmost severity had been taken in vain. The palace of the Quirinal was surrounded with soldiers, a battery of forty pieces of cannon was established directly opposite its gates: but still the spirit of the illustrious captive was unsubdued, and no indication of a disposition to recall the fulminating decree had appeared. Miollis deemed the state of matters so alarming in the beginning of July, that he entered into communication with Murat at Naples; and their united opinion was, that it was indispensable to get immediate possession of the Pope's person, and remove him into France. In pursuance of this determination, which, though not expressly known to or authorised by the Emperor, was in conformity with his prior instructions, and known to be agreeable to his

have directed the religious world as well as the political. It was an additional means of uniting all the parts of the empire, and keeping in peace whatever was beyond it. I would have had *my religious sessions* as well as my legislative: *my council* would have been the assembly of the representatives of Christianity; *the Popes would have been nothing but its presidents*: I would have opened and closed these assemblies, approved and published their decisions, as Constantine and Charlemagne did. That emancipation of the Church from the court of Rome, that union of the spiritual and temporal powers in the hands of one sovereign, had been long the object of my meditations and wishes."—LAS CASES, v. 262, 264.

* "Voyez," said he in the Council of State, "l'insolence des prêtres, qui, dans le partage de l'autorité avec ce qu'ils appellent le pouvoir temporel, se réservent l'action sur l'intelligence, la partie noble de l'homme, et prétendent de me réduire à n'avoir d'action que sur le corps. Ils gardent l'âme et jettent le cadavre."—BIGNON, viii. 281.

wishes, Miollis sent for General Radet on the 4th July, and communicated to him his design of carrying off the Pope, and intrusting the execution of the delicate task to him. Radet, albeit shocked at the task thus imposed upon him, knew his duty too well to hesitate in obeying his instructions; a strong battalion of troops arrived on the following day from Naples, and the military dispositions were quickly completed. At ten at night on the 5th, the Quirinal was surrounded by three regiments; thirty men escaladed the walls of the garden in profound silence, and took post under the windows of the palace; fifty more succeeded in effecting an entrance by the window of an uninhabited room, and having dispersed some groups of domestics, who on the first alarm hastily assembled together, the gates were thrown open, and Radet entered at the head of his troops, who were ordered "to arrest the Pope and Cardinal Pacca, and conduct them immediately out of Rome."¹

Though the assembly of the troops took place on the preceding night, it was not till six o'clock on the following morning that the entry of the palace itself was accomplished. The Pope and Cardinal Pacca were awakened by the strokes of the hatchets which broke down the interior doors, and both, instantly rising, perceived from the tumult in the court, glitter of arms, and troops in all quarters, that the French had effected an entrance into the palace. The holy father expected immediate death; he called for the ring which his predecessor Pius VI. had worn in his last moments, the gift of Queen Clotilda, and, putting it on his finger, looked at it with calm satisfaction. To prevent further violence, the doors were thrown open, and Radet with his officers and gendarmes entered the apartment, where the Pope stood between Cardinal Pacca, Cardinal Despuig, and a few other faithful prelates. Radet then, in a respectful manner, pale and trembling with emotion, announced to his holiness that he was charged with a painful duty; but that he was obliged to

CHAP.
LX.

1809.
July 4.

July 5.
1 Radet,
Narrative
de l'Enlev.
de Pie VII.
7, 9. Ar-
taud, ii. 214,
217. Pacca,
i. 122, 123.

76.
Particu-
lars of his
seizure.

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declare to him, that he must renounce the temporal sovereignty of Rome and the ecclesiastical states, and that, if he refused, he must conduct him to General Miollis, who would assign him his ulterior place of destination. The Pope, without agitation, replied, that if the obligations of a soldier required of him such a duty, those of a pontiff imposed on him others still more sacred ; that the Emperor might “ cut him in pieces, but would never extract from him such a resignation, which he neither could, nor would, nor ought to subscribe.” Radet then ordered him to prepare for immediate departure, intimating that Cardinal Pacca might accompany him on the journey. The pontiff immediately complied ; and the French general having assured him that nothing in his palace should be injured, he said with a smile, “ He who makes light of his life is not likely to be disquieted for the loss of his effects.” Their preparations having been quickly made, the Pope took his place in the carriage with Cardinal Pacca by his side, and, escorted by a powerful body of French cavalry, soon passed the Porta del Popolo, and emerged into the open and desert Campagna. “ Cardinal,” said the pontiff, “ we did well to publish the bull of excommunication on the 10th, or how could it have been done now ?” At the first post-house he wished to give some charity to a poor person ; but, upon inquiry of Cardinal Pacca, he found that between them they had only a papetto, or tenpence. He showed it smilingly to Radet, saying, “ Behold, general, all that we possess of our principality !”¹

¹ Pacca, i. 123, 129.
Radet, 12, 42. Artaud, ii. 218, 229.

77.
The Pope is conducted to Grenoble, and Cardinal Pacca to the castle of Fenestrelles.

The Pope was conducted with all possible expedition by Radicofani and Sienna to Florence. During the journey, as nothing was prepared, the illustrious prisoners underwent great privations ; and after nineteen hours of uninterrupted travelling, in the hottest weather, they reached the first of these towns, where a frugal repast and miserable bed awaited the head of the faithful. At midnight on the following day they arrived at the

Chartreuse of Florence. From thence their journey was continued more leisurely to Alessandria, which they reached on the 15th. More than once in the course of the journey, the Pope and his companion were obliged to exert their influence with the peasants to prevent a forcible attempt at rescue, which the rural crowds, indignant at this scandalous treatment of the head of the Church, were preparing to make. Before leaving Rome, a well-conceived project had been secretly communicated to Pius VII. for delivering him from his oppressors, and securing his escape on board an English frigate, which was cruising for that purpose off Civita Vecchia ; but he refused on any account to leave his post. At Florence he was separated from Cardinal Pacca, who was conducted by a separate route to Grenoble, and soon after, by a special order from Napoleon, transferred to the state prison of Fenestrelles in Savoy, where, amidst Alpine

the beginning of 1813. Then, as the Emperor, after the disasters of the Moscow campaign, found it for his interest to conciliate the Pope, the cardinal was liberated, and joined his captive master at Fontainebleau. The Pope himself was hurried across the Alps by Mont Cenis ; but, as he approached France, the enthusiasm of the people redoubled ; insomuch that, when he reached Grenoble, his cortège had rather the appearance of a beloved sovereign returning to his dominions, than of a captive pontiff on his way to confinement in a foreign land. By a singular coincidence, the enfeebled remnant of the heroic garrison of Saragossa were at that period in Grenoble ; they hastened in crowds to meet their distressed Father, and, when his carriage appeared in sight, fell on their knees as one man, and received his earnest benediction. A captive pope inspired to these captive heroes a respect which they would never have felt for the mighty conqueror who had enthralled them both !¹ Such, in generous and uncorrupted minds,

CHAP.
LX.
1809.

Aug. 3.

Jan. 30.
1813.

July 21.

¹ Pacca, i.
167, 183.
Artaud, ii.
241, 245.

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78.
Napoleon
approves of
the Pope's
seizure.¹ Nap. in
Las Cases,
v. 261.
Month. i.
130.June 9,
1813.² Sav. iv.
131. Ar-
taud, ii. 285,
368. Nap.
v. 261, 262.
Bign. viii.
286, 288.

is the superiority religion confers to all the calamities of life.

Napoleon has protested at St Helena, and apparently with truth, that he was not privy to the actual seizure of the Pope; and that, when he first received the intelligence, he was at a loss what to do with his august captive.¹ But it requires no argument to show, that neither Miollis nor Radet would have ventured on such a step unless they had been well assured that it was conformable, if not to the formal instructions, at least to the secret wishes of the Emperor. And he soon gave convincing proof of this: "for as soon as he received advices of the event," says Savary, "*he approved of what had been done*, and stationed the Pope at Savona, revoking at the same time the gift of Charlemagne, and annexing the papal states to the French empire."* His holiness remained at Savona for above three years, always under restraint and guarded, though not in prison. Napoleon, after the Moscow campaign, having received intelligence that a squadron of English frigates was cruising in the gulf of Lyons, with the design of facilitating his escape, had him removed to Fontainebleau, where he was detained a prisoner till the return of the Emperor from the disaster of Leipsic, when his necessities gave rise to important negotiations with the aged prisoner, which will form the subject of future consideration. Canova, who had been sent for to Paris by Napoleon, to model the colossal statue which is now to be seen on the staircase of Apsley House, interceded energetically in his behalf; but he could obtain no remission of the severe sentence;² the Emperor alleging, as insurmountable charges against him, that "he was a German at heart, and had refused to

* "It is of little moment," says Thibaudeau, "whether Napoleon ordered the seizure of the Pope; he did not disapprove of it, he profited by it, and took upon himself its whole responsibility. His alleged discontent at Schönbrunn, when he received intelligence of the event, proves nothing; it might be part of his views to make it be believed it was done without his authority, and that he only assumed the scandal of the transaction because it was irreparable."—THIBAudeau, vii. 507.

banish the Russians and English." So tenaciously did he hold by his prey, that not even the horrors of the Russian retreat could make him relax it ; he kept his captive firm during the campaign of Leipsic ; and nothing but the crossing of the Rhine by the Allied armies, in spring 1814, procured the liberation of the unhappy pontiff.

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LX.
1809.

Jan. 23.
1814.

The situation of the city of Rome was unquestionably improved by its transference from the drowsy sway of the Church to the energetic administration of Napoleon. Shortly after the annexation of the Roman states to the French dominions, it was declared the second city in the empire. To a deputation from Rome, which arrived at Paris soon after its incorporation with the French empire, Napoleon replied :—" My mind is full of the recollections of your ancestors. The first time that I pass the Alps, I desire to remain some time among you. The French emperors, my predecessors, had detached you from the territory of the empire ; but the good of my people no longer permits such a partition ; France and Italy must be governed on the same system. You have need of a powerful hand to direct you. I shall have a singular pleasure in being your benefactor. Your bishop is the spiritual head of the Church, as I am its Emperor ; I 'render unto God the things that are God's, and unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.'" The official exposition of the state of the empire at the close of the year, portrayed in vivid colours the advantages which would arise from the government of all Italy under one system, and proclaimed the fixed determination of the Emperor never to infringe upon the spiritual authority, nor ever to permit again the temporal sovereignty, of the Church. In pursuance of these views, the Roman territory incorporated with the empire was speedily subjected to the whole regulations of the imperial regime. The Code Napoleon, the conscription, the Continental System were introduced in their full vigour ;¹ prefects and subpre-

79.
Thorough
fusion of the
Roman
states with
the French
empire.

Dec. 12.

¹ Thib. vii.
512, 520.

CHAP. LX.
1809. feets were established, and the taxes, levied according to French principles, carried to the credit of the imperial budget.

80.
Prejudicial
effect of this
measure on
the indepen-
dence of the
Church.

Bossuet has assigned the reason, with his usual elevation of thought, why such a spoliation of all the possessions of the supreme pontiff, by a secular power, ever must be prejudicial to the best interests of religion. "God had chosen," says he, "that the Church, the common mother of all nations, should be independent of all in its temporal affairs, and that the common centre to which all the faithful should look for the unity of their faith, should be placed in a situation above the partialities which the different interests and jealousies of states might occasion. The Church, independent in its head of all temporal powers, finds itself in a situation to exercise more freely, for the common good and protection of Christian kings, its celestial power of ruling the mind, when it holds in the right hand the balance even amidst so many empires, often in a state of hostility ; it maintains unity in all its parts, sometimes by inflexible decrees, sometimes by sage concessions." The principle which calls for the independence of the head of the Church from all temporal sovereignties, is the same which requires the emancipation of its subordinate ministers from dependence on the contributions of their flocks. Human nature in every rank is the same : the thralldom of vice and passion is felt alike in the cottage as on the throne. The subjection of the supreme pontiff to the direct control of France or Austria, is as fatal to his character and respectability as the control of the rural congregations is to the utility of the village pastor. Admitting that the court of Rome has not always shown itself free from tramontane influence, it has at least been less swayed than if it had had its residence at Vienna or Paris ; supposing that the conclave of the cardinals has often been swayed by selfish or ambitious views, it has been much less exposed to the effects of these than if it had

been wholly dependent on external potentates for support. Equity in judgment, whether in temporal or spiritual matters, can never be attained except by such as are independent of those to whom the judgment is to be applied; coercion of vice, whether in exalted or humble stations, can never be effected by those who depend upon that vice for their support; the due direction of thought can never be given but by those who are not constrained to bend to the thoughts of others. It will ever be the great object of tyranny, whether regal or democratic, to beat down this central independent authority; to render the censors of morals subservient to the dominant power; and, under the specious pretence of emancipating mankind from spiritual shackles, in effect to subject them to a far more grievous temporal oppression.

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1809.

But, whatever effects the dethronement and captivity of the Pope were likely to have produced, if they had continued long, on the independence and usefulness of the Church, the immediate effects of the change were in the highest degree beneficial to the city of Rome. Vast was the difference between the slumber of the cardinals and the energy of Napoleon. Improvements, interesting alike to the antiquary and the citizen, were undertaken in every direction. The majestic monuments of ancient Rome, half concealed by the ruins and accumulations of fourteen hundred years, stood forth in renovated splendour. The stately columns of the temple of Jupiter Tonans, relieved of the load of their displaced architrave, were restored to the perpendicular from which they had swerved during their long decay; the beautiful pillars of that of Jupiter Stator, half covered up with fragments of marbles, revealed their exquisite and now fully discovered proportions. The huge interior of the Coliseum, cleared of the rubbish which obstructed its base, again exhibited its wonders to the light. The channels which conducted the water for the aquatic exhibitions, the iron

81.
Vast and
admirable
works un-
dertaken by
the French
at Rome.

CHAP.
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gates which were opened to admit the hundreds of lions to the amphitheatre, the dens where their natural ferocity was augmented by artificial stimulants, the bronze rings to which the Christian martyrs were chained, again appeared to the wondering populace.* The houses which deformed the centre of the Forum were cleared away ; and, piercing through a covering of eighteen feet in thickness, the labours of the workmen at length revealed the pavement of the ancient Forum, the venerable blocks of the Via Sacra, still furrowed by the chariot-wheel marks of a hundred triumphs. Similar excavations at the foot of the pillar of Trajan disclosed the graceful peristyle of columns with which it had been surrounded, and again exhibited fresh, after an interment of a thousand years, the delicate tints of its giallo-antico pillars and pavement. Nor were more distant quarters or modern interests neglected. The temple of Vesta, near the Tiber, was cleared out ; a hundred workmen, under the direction of Canova, prosecuted their searches in the baths of Titus, where the Laocoon had been discovered ; large sums were expended on the Quirinal palace, destined for the residence of the Imperial family when at Rome. Severe laws, and an impartial execution of them, speedily repressed the hideous practice of private assassination, so long the disgrace of the papal states ; a double row of shady trees led from the arch of Constantine to the Appian way, and thence to the Forum ; surveys were made with a view to the completion of the long-neglected drainage of the Pontine marshes ;¹ and preparations commenced for turning aside, for a season, the course of the

¹ Thib. viii.
429, 431.
Bign. ix.
382, 383.
Bot. iv. 25.
Personal
observation.

* The interior of the Coliseum has been again filled up by the papal government, in order to facilitate access to the numerous chapels with which it is encircled ; but the highly curious and interesting structures which were brought to light by the French excavations may be seen faithfully portrayed in several views of Rome, particularly one very interesting plate in Rossini's "*Antichite Romane*," a work which, without the inimitable force and grandeur of Piranesi's, is incomparably more accurate, and gives the best idea of the Roman ruins which is anywhere to be met with.—*Personal Observation.*

Tiber, and discovering in its bed the inestimable treasures of art which were thrown into it during the terrors of the Gothic invasion.

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The immutability of the Roman Catholic Church, amidst all these disasters, is not the least remarkable circumstance in this age of wonders. It appeared unchanged when the deluge subsided on the fall of Napoleon. It survived alike the captivity of the Pope, and the overthrow of his temporal power. "Again doomed to death, the milk-white hind was still fated not to die. Even before the funeral rites had been performed over the ashes of Pius VI. a great reaction had commenced, which, after the lapse of more than forty years, appears to be still in progress. Anarchy had had its day : a new order of things had arisen out of the confusion—new dynasties, new laws, new titles ; and amidst them emerged the ancient religion. The Arabs have a fable that the great Pyramid was built by antediluvian kings, and alone of all the works of man bore the weight of the Flood : such as this was the fate of the papacy. It had been buried under the great inundation, but its deep foundations had remained unshaken ; and, when the waters abated, it appeared alone amidst the ruins of a world which had passed away. The republic of Holland was gone, and the Emperor of Germany, and the great Council of Venice, and the old Helvetian League, and the House of Bourbon, and the Parliaments and Aristocracy of France. Europe was full of young creations—a French Empire, a Kingdom of Italy, a Confederation of the Rhine. Nor had the late events affected only territorial limits and political institutions. The distribution of property, the composition and spirit of society, had, through great part of Catholic Europe, undergone a complete change. But the unchangeable Church was still there." ¹

82.
Immuta-
bility of the
Roman
Catholic
faith.

¹Macaulay's
Essays, iii.
252.

"What does the Pope mean," said Napoleon to Eugene, in July 1807, "by the threat of excommunicat-

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LX.1809.
83.Reflections
on the spoli-
ation of the
Pope, as
connected
with Napo-
leon's sub-
sequent
reverses.

ing me? Does he think the world has gone back a thousand years? *Does he suppose the arms will fall from the hands of my soldiers?*"¹ Within two years after these remarkable words were written, the Pope did excommunicate him, in return for the confiscation of his whole dominions; and in less than four years more, the arms *did fall from the hands of his soldiers*;* and the hosts, apparently invincible, which he had collected, were dispersed and ruined by the blasts of winter. He extorted from the supreme pontiff at Fontainebleau, in 1813, after the terrors and exhaustion of a long captivity, a renunciation of the rights of the church over the Roman states; and within a year after, he himself was compelled, *at Fontainebleau*, to sign the abdication of all his dominions. He consigned Cardinal Pacca, and several other prelates, the courageous counsellors of the bull of excommunication, to a dreary imprisonment of four years amidst the snows of the Alps; and he himself was shortly after doomed to a painful exile of six on the rock of St Helena!¹ There is something in these marvellous coincidences beyond the operations of chance, and which even a Protestant historian feels himself bound to mark for the observation of future ages. The world had not gone back a thousand years, but that Being existed with whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years. And without ascribing these events to any deviation from ordinary laws, or supposing that the common Father, "who sees with equal eye, as Lord of all," the varied modes of

¹ Pacca, i.
283.

* "The weapons of the soldiers," says Segur, in describing the Russian retreat, "appeared of an insupportable weight to their stiffened arms. During their frequent falls, they *fell from their hands*; and, destitute of the power of raising them from the ground, they were left in the snow. They did not throw them away; *famine and cold tore them from their grasp*. The fingers of many were frozen on the muskets which they yet carried, and their hands deprived of the circulation necessary to sustain the weight."—SEGUR, ii, 182.

"The soldiers could no longer hold their weapons; they *fell from the hands even of the bravest and most robust*.—The muskets dropped from the frozen arms of those who bore them."—SALGUES, *Mémoires pour l'Histoire Générale de la France sous Napoléon*, vol. x. chap. 5.

worship of his different creatures, had interposed in a peculiar manner in favour of any particular church, we may, without presumption, rest in the humble belief, that the laws of the moral world are of universal application ; that there are limits to the oppression of virtue even in this scene of trial ; and that, when a power, elevated on the ascendancy of passion and crime, has gone such a length as to outrage alike the principles of justice and the religious feelings of a whole quarter of the globe, the period is not far distant when the aroused indignation of mankind will bring about its punishment.

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CHAPTER LXI.

MARITIME WAR, AND CAMPAIGN OF 1809 IN ARAGON AND CATALONIA.

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1809.
1.

Compara-
tive military
power of
France and
England at
this period.

ALTHOUGH the military power of France and England had never been fairly brought into collision since the commencement of the contest, and both the government and the nation of Great Britain were, to a degree which is now almost inconceivable, ignorant alike of the principles of war with land troops, and the magnitude of the resources for such a conflict which were at their disposal ; yet the forces of the contending parties, when a battle-field was at last found, were in reality much more equally balanced than was commonly imagined. France, indeed, had conquered all the states of continental Europe, and her armies were surrounded with a halo of success which rendered them invincible to the hostility of present power. But England and she were ancient rivals, and the lustre of former renown shone, dimly indeed, but perceptibly, through the darkness of present humiliation. It was in vain that the conquest of all the armies, and the capture of almost all the capitals of Europe was referred to by their old antagonists ; the English rested on the battles of Cressy and Azincourt, and calmly pointed to the imperishable inheritance of historic glory. Their soldiers, their citizens, were alike penetrated with these recollections ; the belief of the natural superiority of the English to the French, in a fair field, was impressed on the

humblest sentinel of the army ; the exploits of the Edwards and the Henrys of ancient times burned in the hearts of the officers, and animated the spirit of the people. The universal arming of all classes, under the danger of Napoleon's invasion, had spread, to an extent of which the Continental nations were wholly unaware, the military spirit throughout the realm ; while the recent campaigns of the army in India had trained a number of officers to daring exploits, habituated them to the difficulties of actual service, and roused again, in the ranks of the privates, that confidence in themselves which is the surest forerunner of victory. The French journals spoke contemptuously of the British victories in the East, and anxiously invoked the time when " this general of sepoy's " should measure his strength with the marshals of the empire. But this feeling of security was founded on ignorance : the chief who had fronted the dangers of Assaye, was not likely to quail before the terrors of more equal encounter ; and the men who had mounted the breach of Seringapatam, or faced the cannonade of Laswaree, had no reason to distrust themselves in the most perilous fields of European warfare.

If the occasional faulty direction of the national resources when the land contest began, and, above all, the total ignorance of the value of time in war which universally prevailed, frequently led the British forces into disaster, and rendered abortive their greatest enterprises ; the firmness with which the struggle was still persevered in by the government and people, the noble spirit which dictated their national engagements, are worthy of the very highest admiration. Shortly after the Peninsular war broke out, and when it was still rather a tumultuary insurrection than a regular warfare, proposals of peace were addressed by Alexander and Napoleon from their place of conference at Erfurth. The basis of this proposition was the principle of *uti possidetis*, and it received additional lustre from being signed by both these

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1809.

2.
Noble spirit
which pre-
vailed at
this time in
the British
diplomatic
engage-
ments. Re-
jection of
the propo-
sals from
Erfurth.
Oct. 12,
1808.

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1809.

Oct. 22.

illustrious potentates, and acknowledging the very principles for which Great Britain herself had formerly contended. In answer to this communication, Mr Canning, the British minister for foreign affairs, stated he would hasten to communicate to his allies, the King of Sweden, and *the existing government of Spain*, the proposals which had been made to him. "Your Excellency will perceive that it is absolutely necessary that his Majesty should receive an immediate assurance that France acknowledges the government of Spain as a party in any negotiation. With Portugal and Sweden, his Majesty has long had the closest ties ; the interests of Sicily are confided to his care ; and though he is not as yet bound to Spain by any formal instrument, he has, in the face of the world, contracted engagements not less binding and sacred than the most solemn treaties." To this it was replied by Russia and France, that "they had no difficulty in at once admitting the sovereigns in alliance with England to a congress, but that they could not admit the Spanish insurgents. The Russian empire has always acted on this principle ; and its Emperor is now, in an especial manner, called to adhere to it, as he has already acknowledged Joseph Buonaparte King of Spain."* This answer broke off the negotiation, and the King of England soon after issued a declaration, in which he announced the rupture of the correspondence, and lamented the adherence of the allied sovereigns to the determination not to treat with the Spanish nation, as the cause of its failure.¹

Dec. 15,
1808.¹ Parl. Deb.
xii. 93, 105.

3.

Treaty of-
fensive and
defensive
between
England
and Spain.
Jan. 14,
1809.

The gallant determination thus expressed by the British government, to admit of no conferences to which the Spanish nation was not admitted as a party, was soon after put to a still more serious trial. Negotiations had for some time been pending for the conclusion of a treaty of alliance between England and the Spanish government, which had been commenced as soon as the

* See Appendix, A, Chap. LXI.

formation of the Central Junta offered any responsible party with whom such an engagement could be formed ; and they were persisted in with unshaken constancy by the British cabinet, notwithstanding all the disasters which in the close of the campaign of 1808 had befallen the Spanish armies, and the capture of their capital by the forces of Napoleon. At length, on the 14th of January, Mr Canning had the satisfaction of signing a treaty of peace and alliance between the two states, by which it was stipulated that “the King of England shall assist to the utmost of his power the Spanish nation in their struggle against the tyranny and usurpation of France, and promises not to acknowledge any King of Spain and the Indies but Ferdinand VII., his heirs, or such lawful successors as the Spanish nation shall acknowledge ; and the Spanish government engages never, in any case, to cede to France any part of the territories or possessions of the Spanish monarchy in any part of the world ; and both the high contracting parties agree to make common cause against France, and not to make peace except by common consent.” When it is recollected, that this treaty was concluded after the Spanish armies had been utterly routed and dispersed by the overwhelming forces of Napoleon, when their capital was taken, more than half their provinces overrun, and on the very day when the British forces embarked at Corunna, after their disastrous retreat from Leon, it must be admitted that the annals of the world do not afford a more sublime example of constancy in adversity, and heroic fidelity to engagements, on the part of both the contracting parties.¹

Faithful alike to its least as to its most considerable allies, the British government at this period concluded a new treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, with the Swedish nation, now exposed to the most serious peril from the invasion of their formidable neighbour ; and threatened alike in Finland and on the Baltic by an

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1809.

¹ See the treaty in Parl. Deb. xiii. 810, 811 ; and Martin's Sup. v. 163.

4.
And with Sweden.
Feb. 3,
1808.

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LXI.

1809.

March 1,
1809.
¹ Martin's
Sup. v. 2, 9.

² *Infra*, ch.
lxx.

5.
Treaty be-
tween Great
Britain and
Turkey.
Jan. 5, 1809.

³ *Infra*, ch.
lxix.

⁴ Martin's
Sup. v. 160.
Ann. Reg.
1809, 134.
State
Papers.

overwhelming force. Shortly after the treaty of Tilsit, and when this danger from Russia was foreseen, a convention was concluded with the court of Stockholm, by which Great Britain and Sweden mutually engaged to conclude no separate peace, and the former power was to pay an annual subsidy of £1,200,000 to the latter: and this agreement was confirmed by an additional convention concluded at Stockholm a year after, by which it was agreed that the subsidy should be paid quarterly, and in advance.¹ But the pressure of external events prevented the latter treaty from being long acted on, and produced a change of dynasty in the Scandinavian peninsula, fraught with important consequences upon the general interests of Europe, which will be the subject of narrative in a future chapter.²

Another treaty, attended with important consequences, both present and future, was about the same time contracted between Great Britain and the Ottoman Porte. Since the conclusion of the peace of Tilsit, which delivered over Napoleon's ally, Turkey, to the tender mercies of Russia, only stipulating the lion's share for the French empire, and the consequent commencement of a bloody war on the Danube between the two powers, which will hereafter be considered,³ there was, in reality, no cause of hostility between England and the court of Constantinople. They were both at war with Russia, and both the objects of enmity to France: they were naturally, therefore, friends to each other. Impressed with these ideas, the British cabinet made advances to the Divan, representing the mutual advantage of an immediate cessation of hostilities; and so completely had the treachery of France at Tilsit obliterated the irritation produced by Sir John Duckworth's expedition, and undermined the influence of Sebastiani at Constantinople, that these overtures met with the most favourable reception.⁴ A treaty of peace was, in consequence, concluded between England and Turkey, in the beginning of January, at Constantinople,

which, relieving the Grand Seignior from all apprehension in his rear, or from the maritime power of Russia, enabled him to direct his whole force to the desperate contest on the Danube.

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1809.

Nor was this treaty of less importance eventually to Great Britain. By re-establishing the relations of amity and commerce with a vast empire, bordering, along so extensive a frontier, the eastern states of Christendom, it opened a huge inlet for British manufactures and colonial produce, which was immediately and largely taken advantage of. Bales of goods, infinitely beyond the wants or consumption of the Ottoman empire, were shipped for Turkey, transported up the Danube, and finding their way, carried on mules and men's heads, over the mountain frontier of Transylvania, penetrated through all Hungary and the Austrian empire. Thus while Napoleon, intent on the Continental System, which absolutely required for its success the formation of all Europe into one league for the exclusion of British merchandise, flattered himself that by the treaty of Tilsit he had effectually attained that object, he had already, in the consequences of that very triumph, awakened a resistance which in a great degree defeated it; and in the aroused hostility of the Spanish peninsula and Turkey, severally delivered up to his own and Alexander's ambition by that pacification, had compensated Great Britain for the commercial advantages she had lost in northern Europe.¹

6.
Extension to which it led of British Continental commerce.

¹ See the treaty in Martin's Sup. v. 160. Ann. Reg. 1809, 134. State Papers.

But, although the constancy and resolution of the British government at this crisis was worthy of the noble cause which they were called upon to support, it was not without great difficulty that they succeeded in prevailing upon parliament and the people to second their efforts. The dispersion of the Spanish armies, the fall of Madrid, and the calamitous issue of Sir John Moore's retreat, had conspired in an extraordinary degree to agitate and discourage the public mind. To the unanimous burst of

7.
Responding views on the Peninsular contest which generally prevailed in Great Britain.

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LXI.

1809.

enthusiasm which had followed the outbreak of the Spanish insurrection, and the extraordinary successes with which it was at first attended, had succeeded a depression proportionally unreasonable. The populace, incapable of steady perseverance, and ever ready to rush from one extreme to another, now condemned government, in no measured strains, for pursuing that very line of conduct, which, a few months before, had been the object of their warmest eulogy and most strenuous support. The insanity of attempting to resist the French power by land ; the madness of expecting anything like durable support from popular insurrection ; the impossibility of opposing any effectual barrier to Napoleon's Continental dominion ; his vast abilities, daring energy, and unbounded resources, were loudly proclaimed by the Opposition party. A large portion of the press adopted the same views, and augmented the general consternation by the most gloomy predictions. To such a height did the excitement arise, that it required all the firmness of ministers, supported by the constancy of the aristocratic party, to stem the torrent, and prevent the British troops from being entirely withdrawn from the Peninsula, and the Spanish war being utterly extinguished by its first serious reverses.¹

¹ Ann. Reg.
1809, 26, 29.
South. Pen.
War, ii. 328,
331.

8.
Arguments
of the Opposi-
tion
against the
Spanish
war.

The debates in parliament on this, as on every other occasion, exhibited a faithful picture of the sentiments entertained by the people ; and are interesting not merely as indicating the views adopted by the leaders of the opposite parties, but as affording a true image of the opinions by which the nation itself was divided. On the side of the Opposition, it was strongly argued by Lord Grenville, Lord Grey, Mr Ponsonby, and Mr Whitbread, "That experience had now proved, what might from the first have been anticipated, that the Peninsula was not a theatre on which the British forces could ever be employed with advantage ; with the Pyrenees unlocked, and the road between Paris and Madrid as open as between Paris

and Antwerp, nothing could justify our sending thirty or forty thousand men into the interior of Spain to combat two hundred thousand. Such a measure can only be compared to the far-famed march to Paris, to which it is fully equal in wildness and absurdity.* It is clear it must rest with the Spaniards themselves to work out their own independence, and that without that spirit no army that we can send can be of any avail. The cautious defensive system of warfare which the Spanish juntas originally recommended has been abandoned, from the delusive hopes inspired by the regular armies we chose to send them, and defeat and ruin have been the consequence. As if to make a mockery of our assistance, we have sent our succours to the farthest possible point from the scene of action, and made our depot at Lisbon, where the French must have been cut off and surrendered, if we had not kindly furnished them with the means of transport to France, from whence they might be moved by the enemy to the quarter most serviceable for his projects.

“When the Spanish insurrection broke out, and the world looked on in anxious suspense on that great event, ministers took none of the steps necessary to enable parliament to judge of the measures which should be pursued. In the generous enthusiasm, the confidence and prodigality of the nation outstripped even the most sanguine wishes

9.
Alleged
absence of
the means of
continued
resistance
in Spain.

* Lord Grenville here alluded to an expression of Lord Liverpool's, then Mr Jenkinson, in 1793, that the Allied army, after the fall of Valenciennes, should march direct to Paris. This saying was, for twenty years afterwards, the subject of constant ridicule by the Opposition party, and it was set down by general consent as one of the most absurd ebullitions that ever came from the mouth of man. Yet it is now admitted by Napoleon, and all the French military historians, that the observation was perfectly just, and that, if the Allies had held together and pressed on after that event, they would have taken the French capital, and terminated the war in that campaign. A parallel case, in domestic transactions, is to be found in Lord Castlereagh's celebrated saying regarding “the ignorant impatience of taxation,” which nevertheless it is now plain was entirely well founded, as but for it the national debt would now have been entirely paid off, or reduced to a mere trifle. So fallacious a guide is public opinion, when not formed at a distance from the event, and with the benefit of the light which subsequent experience, calm discussion, and superior intellects, have thrown on the question.—See *Ante*, Chap. XIII. § 40 ; and Chap. XLI. § 24.

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of ministers ; men, money, transports, stores, all were put with boundless profusion at their disposal. How have they justified that confidence ? Is it not clear that it has been misplaced ? It was evident to every one that our whole disposable military force could not hope to cope single-handed with the immense armies of Napoleon ; and therefore it was their bounden duty, before they hazarded any portion of our troops in the cause, to be well assured that the materials of an efficient and lasting hostility existed in the country. It was not sufficient to know, that monks could excite some of the poorer classes to insurrection, and that, when so excited, they evinced for a time great enthusiasm. The real question was, were they animated with that general resolution from which alone national efforts could flow ; and was it guided and directed by those influential classes, from whose exertion alone anything like steadiness and perseverance could be anticipated ? No proper inquiry was made into these subjects. From the agents whom ministers sent out, they got nothing but false or exaggerated information, more likely to mislead than to enlighten ; and the consequence has been, that immense stores were thrown away or fell into the enemy's hands, vast subsidies were squandered or embezzled, and the entire fabric of delusion and misrepresentation fell before the first shock of the imperial forces.

10.
And errors
into which
Sir John
Moore had
been led by
Mr Frere.

“ In the direction of our own troops, mismanagement was, if possible, still more flagrant. Mr Frere was obviously not a proper person to be sent to Madrid to report as to the prudence or chances of success of Sir John Moore's advance into Spain : a military man should have been there, qualified to judge of the real state of the Spanish armies, and not expose the flower of the British troops to destruction, from crediting the rodomontade of proclamations, and the representations of interested supporters. When Sir John did arrive in Spain, in the middle of December, he came in time only to be the last

devoured: all the Spanish armies had been dissipated before the British fired a shot. After Napoleon had arrived at Madrid, the retreat previously and wisely ordered by the English general was suspended, and a forward movement, fraught with the most calamitous results, commenced. By what influence or representations was that most disastrous change of measures brought about? That was the point into which it behoved parliament to inquire, for there was the root of all the subsequent misfortunes. Mr Frere's despatches at that time urged Moore to advance, representing the great strength of the insurrection in the south of Spain; and that, if he would attack the enemy in the north, the Spanish cause, then almost desperate, would have time to revive. Incalculable were the calamities consequent on that most absurd advice; for such were the dangers into which it led the British army, that, within a few days afterwards, Sir John Moore was obliged to resume his retreat, and if he had not done so, in twenty-four hours more that army would have been surrounded and destroyed. What has been the result of all this imbecility? A shameful and disastrous retreat, which will influence the character of England long after all of us shall have ceased to live. We never can expect to be able to meet the four or five hundred thousand men whom Buonaparte can pour into Spain: when the opportunity was lost of seizing the passes of the Pyrenees, and the Peninsula was inundated with his troops, success had become hopeless, and the struggle should never have been attempted."¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
xii. 12, 21,
and 1073.

On the other hand, it was contended by Lord Liverpool, Lord Castlereagh, and Mr Canning: "The question now is, whether we are to record a public avowal of a determination not to desert the cause and the government to which we are pledged, and profess ourselves undismayed by the reverses we have sustained in that cause, which those very reverses have rendered it a more sacred duty to support. Those who inferred that the

11.
Answer of
the Minis-
ters in sup-
port of the
Spaniards.

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cause was desperate on account of these reverses, were little acquainted with history, and least of all with Spanish history. There it would be found that nations, overrun just as completely as the Spaniards had been, had continued the contest for ten or twenty years; and though constantly worsted in regular battles, had still, by perseverance and resolution, in the end proved triumphant. The cause in which they were engaged was the most interesting to humanity; it was a struggle for their liberty, their independence, and their religion; for the homes of their fathers and the cradles of their descendants. Is nothing to be risked in support of so generous an ally? Is England, so renowned in history for her valour and perseverance, to be disheartened by the first reverse, and yield the palm to her ancient rivals, whom she has so often conquered even in their own territory, merely because she was for a time unable to withstand forces quadruple her own armies?

12.
Great suc-
cesses
already
achieved.

“It is a mistake, however, to assert that we have sustained nothing but disasters in the campaign. Was the conquest of Portugal; the capture of all its fortresses, arsenals, and resources; the defeat and capitulation of one of the best armies and ablest marshals of France, nothing for our first essay in Continental warfare? When we advanced into Spain, it was to act only as an auxiliary force; such was the express and earnest request of the Spaniards themselves, and it was the part which befitted the allies of so considerable and renowned a nation to take. Spain had made an energetic effort; she had combated with a spirit and constancy which had not distinguished greater empires and more extensive resources; she had gained triumphs which might put northern Europe to the blush; and, if she had been unable to stand the first brunt of a power before which all the military monarchies of the Continent had sunk, it was ungenerous to reproach her with her reverses in the hour of her misfortune, unmanly to be discouraged because important

victories have been followed by what may yet prove only passing clouds. It is in vain to attempt to disparage the efforts of the Spanish army and nation. Those are not despicable victories which, for the first time since the French Revolution broke out, had arrested the course of its champion's triumphs, and made the conquerors of northern Europe pass under the Caudine forks; those were not contemptible national exertions which drove a French army of a hundred thousand men behind the Ebro, and brought Napoleon with two hundred thousand more from the other side of the Rhine.

“Nothing can be more erroneous than the opinion which has become general since the late reverses, that the Spaniards cannot, under any circumstances, require our assistance; that if they are in earnest in the great object of their deliverance, they must work it out for themselves, and have the means of doing so without the aid of British soldiers; and that, if they are indifferent to it, no succour of ours can achieve it for them. Such a proposition sounds well, and might perhaps be founded in truth, if Spain had a regular army to support and form a nucleus for the efforts of her enthusiastic peasantry. But all history demonstrates that the resistance of no people, however resolute, is to be relied on for success in a protracted warfare, if they are entirely deprived of the support and example of regular armies. It is the combination of the two which makes a nation invincible. Spain has the one, but not the other; it is for England, so far as her resources will go, to supply the deficiency, and ingraft on the energetic efforts of newly-raised forces the coolness and intrepidity of her incomparable soldiers. Unless such a nucleus of resistance remains in the Peninsula to occupy the French armies in one quarter, while organisation is going on in another, no efficient resistance can be expected, because the patriot armies will be reached and dispersed, in every province, before they have acquired any degree of efficiency. How has every English patriot

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13.
Absolute
necessity to
Spain of ex-
ternal aid.

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14.
Defence of
Sir John
Moore's
advance.

mourned the neglect of the fairest opportunity that ever occurred of combating the forces of the Revolution, by leaving the heroic Vendéans to perish under the merciless sword of the Republic! Taught by past error, let us not repeat it, now that resistance of the same description has arisen on a much greater scale, and under circumstances offering a much fairer prospect of success.

“The advance of Sir John Moore to Sahagun was neither undertaken solely on his own responsibility, nor solely on the advice of Mr Frere: he had previously, from intercepted despatches from Berthier to Soult, ascertained that the latter would be on the Carrion on a certain day, and knew from thence that an opportunity was afforded of striking an important blow against that general when unsupported by the other French corps. About the same time advices arrived from Mr Frere, painting in the warmest colours the resolution of the people of Madrid to emulate the example of Saragossa, and bury themselves under the ruins of the capital rather than surrender it to the French arms. Such were the concurring reasons which prompted the forward movement of the British general: and would not that general be unworthy of commanding British soldiers who could hesitate, under such circumstances, to advance to the support of his allies? On this occasion, the inestimable importance of our regular troops in the war was distinctly shown. This well-conceived invasion, though effected only by twenty-five thousand men, by menacing the enemy's line of communication, paralysed the whole hostile armies of Spain; stopped at once the progress of the French corps both towards Andalusia and Portugal; gave the troops and inhabitants of these countries time to prepare for their defence, and drew Napoleon himself, with seventy thousand of his best men, into a remote corner of Spain. But for this seasonable advance, but for our assistance, the war would have been terminated in the first consternation consequent on the fall of Madrid.

“The sending out transports and bringing the troops home was not the work of government: it was the consequence of a distinct requisition from Sir David Baird that he required them; thirteen thousand men were re-landed after being shipped in this country, in consequence of that demand, and the transports, to the infinite grief of government, were sent out empty. But the cause of Spain was not yet desperate; and it was just neither to that country nor to our own army, which, it was to be hoped, would yet prove the stay of Europe, to assert that its honour was gone for ever. All the energy of liberty, all the sacredness of loyalty, still survived; and the Spanish revolution might yet be destined by Providence to stand between posterity and French despotism, and to show to the world that amidst the paroxysms of freedom a monarch might still be loved. If we had been obliged to leave Spain, we had left it with fresh laurels blooming upon our brows—laurels more honourable in the sight of God and man, because more purely won, than if gained in the richest field of self-aggrandisement, or amidst the securest triumphs of selfish ambition.” These generous sentiments, addressed to an assembly in a large proportion of whom the chivalrous feelings yet glowed, and who had recently caught the flame of patriotic ardour from the early glories of the Spanish war, proved triumphant with a great majority of the House; and Mr Ponsonby’s motion for a committee to inquire into the conduct of the campaign in Spain, was negatived by a majority of 93—the numbers being 127 to 220.¹

These debates, though they by no means assuaged the public excitement after the calamitous issue of the campaign, had at least one good effect,—that of demonstrating where it was that the real fault lay, and what should now be done to repair it. Nothing could be clearer, when the question was sifted to the bottom, than that the advance of Sir John Moore had been an able and well-judged step; that his subsequent retreat was alike necessary and

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15.

The evacuation of the country had been done at the instance of Sir David Baird. Result of the debate.

¹ Parl. Deb. xii. 22, 23, and 1075, 1104.

16.
Light which these debates threw on the real errors of the campaign.

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expedient; that the withdrawing Napoleon's Guards from Madrid, and leading Ney and Soult to Corunna, had saved the southern provinces and the cause of Spanish independence; and that, if there was any fault in its direction, it was in the unnecessary haste with which the retreat had been conducted—a venial error, the consequence of inexperienced troops and a long-established despondency, on military affairs, in the public mind. The real error lay in abandoning the Peninsula, if Corunna was no longer tenable, and steering with the transports for England, instead of making for Lisbon or Cadiz. Disorganised as the army was by the sufferings of the retreat, it would soon have recovered its efficiency in the quiet of the Portuguese capital; the immense stores sent out by England would have speedily replaced its equipment and restored its *matériel*; a sense of security, the arrival of reinforcements from home, would ere long have revived its spirit. The French marshals would have had little to boast of, if, after the whole Peninsular war had been paralysed for its destruction, and two of their corps had been drawn to the extremity of Galicia in its pursuit, the English army had reappeared, a few days after, reinforced by thirteen thousand fresh troops, at the rock of Lisbon; and, from a still more formidable central position, threatened in flank their wearied and harassed troops, scattered from the Asturian mountains to the Sierra Morena.

17.
The government resolve to support the Spanish war, and Sir A. Wellesley is sent out to Lisbon.

Impressed with these ideas, the English government, after a temporary hesitation till the decision of parliament on the subject was known, took the magnanimous and fortunate resolution still to persevere in a land contest in the Peninsula, and to send out considerable reinforcements to Portugal. The troops, thirteen thousand strong, which had been prepared to reinforce Sir John Moore, were accordingly retained in the sea-ports to which they had been directed, and in the beginning of April sailed for Lisbon. The command of the expedition was given to Sir Arthur Wellesley, whom his great achieve-

ments in India, as well as his recent triumph in Portugal, clearly pointed out for that arduous duty. So shaken were the minds of all, however, by the recent Peninsular disasters, and so uncertain was even government of the state of Portugal, that his instructions directed him, if, on his arrival at Lisbon, he found that capital evacuated by the British troops, to make for Cadiz. This calamitous event, fortunately, had not taken place: the standard of independence still waved in the Tagus; courageous efforts had been made during the winter in Portugal; and on the 22d April Sir Arthur landed, amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants, at Lisbon, and commenced that career which has rendered his own name and that of his country immortal. He never re-embarked there again to steer for Britain: the days were passed when the English looked for safety to their ships: when next he set sail for England, it was from Calais with his cavalry, which had marched thither in triumph from Bayonne.¹

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April 22.

¹ Gurw. iv.
246. Soult,
ii. 388.

To provide for the war on the gigantic scale on which during this year it was to be conducted, at once in Flanders, Austria, and Portugal, large supplies of men and money were requisite; and the attention of government was early and anxiously directed to these vital objects. It had long been perceived that the true nursery for the British army was the militia, which, being raised by ballot for home service only, did not excite the jealousy of a people too much attached to their liberties to submit, save in the last necessity, to conscription for the regular army. A bill, accordingly, was brought in by Lord Castlereagh, which soon received the assent of the legislature, which provided for raising twenty-four thousand men for the militia, by bounties of ten guineas each—and, if that temptation proved insufficient, by ballot—in order to replace an equal number who had volunteered from that service into the line. This measure proved entirely successful. The

18.
Measures to
increase the
land forces.
March 6.

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¹ Parl. Deb.
xii. 538, 539,
and 514,
323.

19.
Budget and
naval and
military
forces of
Britain.

bounty for enlisting into the regular army was at the same time raised to twelve guineas ; and from that time till the close of the war no difficulty was experienced in raising the requisite number of men, without any forced levy, for both services—even to supply the vast consumption of the Peninsular war—so strongly was the spirit of the nation now roused against the usurpations of France, and so widely had the military spirit spread with the general arming of the people which followed the threats of Napoleon's invasion.¹

The raising of supplies for a year, when operations were contemplated on a scale of such magnitude, presented difficulties of no ordinary kind ; but they were surmounted without any extraordinary addition to the burdens of the people. The war expenditure amounted to £53,000,000 ; the ways and means, including a loan of £11,000,000, being somewhat more. The total expenditure of this year, including the interest of the debt and sinking fund, was £89,522,000, while the total income was £90,525,000. The regular army amounted to 210,000 men, exclusive of 80,000 militia ; of whom 100,000 were disposable in the British islands ; and the navy, manned by 130,000 seamen, numbered no less than 1061 ships of war, of which 698 were in commission, 242 were of the line, besides 42 building, and 113 of that class were actually at sea. These numbers deserve to be noted, as marking the highest point to which the British navy had yet reached in that or any other war ; and indicate an amount of naval force far superior to that of all nations put together, and to which the world never had seen, and perhaps never will see a parallel.^{2*}

The first great success which occurred to elevate the hopes of the British after the disasters of the Peninsular campaign occurred at sea. A squadron of eight sail of the line and two frigates, under Admiral Willaumez, had for some time been watching for an opportunity to elude

² Ann. Reg.
1809, 81.
James' Naval Hist. iv.
404, Table
17. Parl.
Deb. xiv.
531. Porter's Parl.
Tables, i.
p. 1.

* See Appendix, B, Chap. LXI.

the vigilance of the British cruisers and escape from Brest, in order to gain a general rendezvous assigned them by the French government in BASQUE ROADS. The object of this movement was to chase the British blockading squadron from before l'Orient; liberate the ships there, which consisted of three sail of the line and five frigates; and, with the united force of eleven line-of-battle ships and seven frigates, make for Martinique, now threatened by a British expedition, and for the relief of which the squadron had several thousand land troops on board. On the 21st February they effected their object of sailing from Brest, immediately steered for the south, and after some difficulty, owing to the narrow channels and shoal-waters round the Isle d'Aix, the desired junction was effected, and Willaumez found himself at the head of eleven ships of the line and seven frigates in Basque Roads. Thither he was immediately followed by the British squadron under Lord Gambier, which, being joined to the blockading force off l'Orient, amounted to eleven sail of the line. Alarmed by the approach of so formidable a fleet, the French vessels weighed anchor, and stood for the inner and more protected roads of the Isle d'Aix. In performing this operation, one of their line-of-battle ships, the *Jean Bart*, went ashore and was lost. The British admiral immediately followed, and anchored in Basque Roads, directly opposite the enemy, with his frigates and smaller vessels in advance; and as the close proximity of the hostile fleets, and their confined anchorage, rendered them in a peculiar manner exposed to attack by fireships, extraordinary precautions were adopted on both sides against that much-dreaded mode of assault.¹

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LXI.1809.
20.French
expedition
sails from
Brest to
Basque
Roads.

Feb. 21.

March 26.

¹ James's
Naval Hist.
iv. 94, 110.
Brenton, ii.
277, 279.
Thib. vii.
260.

21.

Position of
the French
in Basque
Roads. An
attack with
fireships is
resolved on.

The French fleet was now anchored in a very strong position. On one side they were covered by the Isle d'Aix, garrisoned by two thousand men, and batteries mounting thirty long thirty-six pounders and several mortars; while, on the other, the isle of Oleron, at the

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distance of three miles and a half, was fortified by several works, the guns of which nearly reached the range of those of the citadel of Aix. Shoals also abounded in all directions ; and the French fleet was drawn up in two close lines, between the protecting forts near the shore, in a situation not unlike that of Bruèys at the Nile, with this difference that the vessels in the second line were placed opposite the openings in the first, as at Trafalgar. As any regular action with the fleet seemed hazardous in such a situation, Lord Gambier suggested an attack by means of fireships, in which the admiralty readily concurred. Twelve fireships were immediately prepared with extraordinary expedition in the English harbours ; and, as most of the officers consulted gave it as their opinion that the undertaking would be attended with great hazard, the execution of it was intrusted to LORD COCHRANE, who considered it as attended with little difficulty, and whose cool intrepidity and inexhaustible resources, long demonstrated in a partisan warfare on the coasts of France and Spain, pointed him out as peculiarly qualified for the important enterprise. He at first declined, from delicacy to the officers already in the fleet ; but, being pressed by government, accepted the command, and in the beginning of April joined the fleet in Basque Roads, whither he was immediately afterwards followed by the Mediator frigate, and twelve other vessels armed as fireships.¹

¹ James, iv.
102, 103.
Brenton, ii.
278, 279.

22.
Prepara-
tions for the
attack on
the enemy
in Basque
Roads.
April 14.

The preparations being at length completed, the different frigates and smaller vessels moved to the stations assigned to them, and, on the evening of the 11th April, advanced on their perilous service. The enemy being aware, from the arrival of the fireships, of what was intended, had made every preparation for repelling the attack. A strong boom had been drawn across the line of their fleet, at the distance of 110 yards, composed of cables and chains twisted together, and secured by anchors at either end, of the enormous weight of five tons each ; while the whole boats of the fleet, seventy-three

in number, were assembled near the boom, in five divisions, for the purpose of boarding and towing away the fireships. The line-of-battle ships lay behind, with their top-masts on deck, and every imaginable precaution taken to avert the dreadful fate which menaced them. Nothing, however, could resist the daring of the British sailors, and the admirable skill of the officers in direction of the fireships. The wind, which was strong, and blew right in upon shore, was as favourable as possible; and under its blast the fireships got under weigh, and bore down swiftly on the enemy's line, while the sailors in both fleets strained their anxious eyes to discern the dark masses as they silently glided through the gloom. Lord Cochrane directed the leading vessel, which had fifteen hundred barrels of powder and four hundred shells on board; while the Mediator, under the able direction of Captain Woolridge, filled with as many combustibles, immediately followed. The admirable direction given the latter vessel, by its heroic commander, brought it down direct against the boom; and the whole fireships, which rapidly followed, made straight towards the enemy's fleet, amidst a heavy fire from the batteries on both sides, and the line in front. Dauntless, indeed, was the intrepidity of the crews, who, during the darkness of a tempestuous night, steered vessels charged to the brim with gunpowder and the most combustible materials, right into the middle of a concentric fire of bombs and projectiles, any one of which might in an instant have blown them into the air.¹

During the gloom of that stormy night, however, it was impossible even for the greatest skill and coolness to steer the fireships precisely to the points assigned to them. The wind was lulled by the effect of the first explosions, and the consequence was, that many of them blew up at such a distance from the enemy's line as to do little or no damage. So resolute, however, were the captain and crew of the Mediator to discharge the duty

¹ James, iv. 106, 107.
Lord Gambier's Desp. 14th April 1809. Ann. Reg. 1809, 443. App. to Chron. Brenton, ii. 280.

23.
Dreadful nocturnal attack, and consequences to the French fleet.

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assigned to them, that, after breaking the boom and setting fire to their vessel, they still held by her till she was almost in the enemy's fleet, and were blown out of the ship when she exploded, severely, though happily not mortally scorched. Lord Cochrane's vessel, which led the way, though directed by that gallant officer with the most consummate skill and courage, was unable to break the boom till the Mediator came up, when it gave way. A minute thus lost caused her to explode a hundred yards too soon, and without any damage to the enemy. No sooner, however, was the boom burst than the other fireships came in, wrapped in flames, in quick succession ; and this awful spectacle, joined to the tremendous explosions of the Mediator and Lord Cochrane's vessel, produced such consternation in the French fleet that they all slipped their cables and ran ashore in wild confusion. The glare of so many prodigious fires, illuminating half the heavens, the flashes of the guns from the forts and retreating ships, the frequent flight of shells and rockets from the fire-vessels, and the bright reflection of the rays of light from the sides of the French ships in the background, formed a scene at once animating and sublime. One fireship fell on board the Ocean, which carried the French admiral's flag, as she lay grounded on the shore : in an instant the flames spread over her. At this moment the Tonnerre and Patriote also got entangled in the fearful group : inevitable destruction seemed to await them all, when a sudden roll of the sea threw the Tonnerre aside, and the fireship drifted past. When the day dawned at five o'clock, half the enemy's fleet were discerned ashore ; at half-past seven only two were afloat ; and Lord Cochrane, who had regained his own ship, the Imperieuse, repeatedly made signal to Lord Gambier, who lay twelve miles off, to advance. The last bore, " Half the fleet can destroy the enemy : eleven on shore." ¹

¹ James, iv.
109, 111.
Brenton, ii.
280, 281.
French
Official
Account.
James, iv.
109.

Success as splendid as that gained at the Nile or Copen-

hagen now awaited the British admiral, and it had been brought within his reach by daring and skill not inferior to that of Nelson himself. But Nelson was not at the head of the fleet. Inferior to none of the captains who followed that immortal flag in personal gallantry, Lord Gambier wanted the moral courage, the confidence in himself, which, in hazardous circumstances, is requisite for decisive success in a commander. At ten minutes before six, Lord Cochrane had first made signal that half the fleet was ashore; and, if the admiral had instantly weighed anchor and stood in to the roads, he would, at eight o'clock, have been within reach of fire, when only two of them were afloat. Instead of this, he did nothing till half-past nine; and then, instead of making the signal to move, merely called a council of war of flag-captains to come on board his ship. In consequence, it was not till a quarter before eleven that the fleet weighed; and then, having advanced half-way, it anchored again six miles from the enemy, in the belief that their ships could not be got off, and that it was hazardous, till the tide had risen higher, to venture farther in amidst the intricate shoals of Basque Roads. The *Ætna* bomb and some frigates and lighter vessels were, however, moved on under the orders of Captain Bligh. Meanwhile the French evinced extraordinary activity in getting their vessels off the shore, and, as the tide rose, several were floated and warped up the Charente.¹

Stung to the quick by seeing his noble prizes thus eluding his grasp, Lord Cochrane, with heroic gallantry, advanced himself to the attack in his frigate the *Imperieuse*. He was quickly followed by Captain Bligh with the bomb and light vessels, and a heavy cannonade was commenced on the most exposed of the enemy's ships. The *Calcutta* of fifty guns quickly struck her colours to the *Imperieuse*, the *Ville de Varsovie* and *Aquilon* soon after yielded to the concentric fire of the other frigates, and were burned as soon as the prisoners

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24.Attack on
the ships
ashore, and
destruction
of part of
them.

¹ Lord Gambier's account. Ann. Reg. 435. App. to Chron. James, iv. 110, 116. Brenton, ii. 281, 282. Thib. vii. 261.

25.

Lord Cochrane advances unsupported, and gains partial success.

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¹ James, iv.
110, 122.
Brenton, ii.
281, 282.
Thib. vii.
261. Lord
Gambier's
Account,
Ann. Reg.
435. App.
to Chron.

were removed; and the *Tonnerre* was set on fire by her own crew, and blew up. So general was the consternation on the part of the enemy, that another French seventy-four, the *Tourville*, was abandoned by its crew, and might have been taken possession of by an English boat's crew, which, unaware of its condition, accidentally came very near. The *Indienne* frigate was also burned by the French. The other ships, however, though seriously injured, and two of them rendered unserviceable by being thrown ashore in the tempestuous gale, were by great efforts got afloat during the high tides which followed the strong westerly wind that prevailed during the action, and warped into safe anchorage in the upper part of the *Charente*.¹

26.
Proceedings
which fol-
lowed in
England.

Lord Cochrane was deservedly made a Knight of the Bath for the admirable skill and coolness exhibited by him on this trying occasion; and there cannot be a doubt, when the French accounts are compared with the English, that, if he had had the command of the fleet, the whole enemy's ships would have been destroyed. Such as it was, the success was almost equal to that of Lord Howe in those seas fifteen years before, and it would have thrown the nation into transports of joy at the commencement of the war. But Lord Nelson had spoiled the English for anything less than complete success; and murmurs soon began to spread against Lord Gambier for not having in a more energetic manner supported Lord Cochrane on that occasion. These were soon materially increased by the strong charges openly advanced against the commander-in-chief by Admiral Harvey, the second in command, one of the bravest captains of Trafalgar, who burned with desire to signalise himself against the enemy, and had expressed his opinion on the occasion perhaps with more frankness than discretion. Lord Cochrane also intimated, that if the thanks of the House of Commons were moved to Lord Gambier, he would oppose it in parliament. The result was, that Admiral Harvey

was brought to a court-martial for the words he had uttered, cashiered, and dismissed the service, though he was shortly after restored for his gallantry at Trafalgar, with the general approbation of the navy. Lord Gambier, after a protracted trial, was acquitted by his court-martial, and afterwards received the thanks of both houses of parliament, as well as Lord Cochrane and the other officers and men employed on the occasion.¹

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¹ Brenton,
ii. 285, 286.
James, iv.
118, 121.

Napoleon's opinion on this matter was decided. "Cochrane," said he, "not only could have destroyed the whole French ships, but he might and would have taken them out, had the English admiral supported him as he ought to have done; for, in consequence of the signal made by the French admiral for every one to shift for himself, they became panic-struck, and cut their cables. Their dread of the fireships was so great, that they actually threw their powder overboard, so that they could have offered very little resistance. Fear deprived the French captains of their senses. Had Cochrane been supported, he would have taken every one of the ships."² Impressed with these ideas, the French Emperor brought the officers of his lost vessels to trial; and Lafond, the captain of the Calcutta, was condemned and executed, and two others were sentenced to imprisonment.³

27.
Napoleon's
opinion on
this subject.

² O'Meara,
ii. 292.

³ Thib. vii.
261.

Lord Cochrane was, after the death of Nelson, the greatest naval commander of that age of glory. Equal to his great predecessor in personal gallantry, enthusiastic ardour, and devotion to his country, he was, perhaps, his superior in original genius, inventive power, and inexhaustible resources. The skill and indefatigable perseverance with which, during the Spanish war, when in command only of his own frigate, he alarmed and distracted the whole coast from Toulon to Barcelona, has never been surpassed; with the crew of a frigate, which did not exceed three hundred and fifty men, he kept ten thousand of the enemy constantly occupied. It was his misfortune

28.
Character
of Lord
Cochrane.

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to arrive at manhood and high command only towards the close of the war, when the enemy's fleets had disappeared from the ocean, and the glorious opportunities of its earlier years had passed away: more truly than Alexander the Great, he might have wept that there no longer remained a world to conquer. His coolness in danger was almost unparalleled even in the English navy, and in the days of Nelson and Collingwood; * and his men had such confidence in his judgment and resources, that they would have followed wherever he led, even to the cannon's mouth. Unhappily for himself and his country, he engaged with little discretion when ashore in party politics; he stood forth as a prominent opponent of government on various occasions, on which he unnecessarily put himself forward in contests with which he had no concern; while his strong inventive turn led him, when unemployed, to connect himself with some transactions with which his heroic qualities had no affinity.

29.
His indis-
cretions lead
unhappily to
his disgrace.

In consequence of these unhappy indiscretions and connexions, he was, towards the close of the war, brought to trial before the court of King's Bench, for a hoax practised for jobbing purposes on the Stock Exchange, and, under the direction of Lord Ellenborough, convicted and sentenced to imprisonment and an ignominious punishment, the worst part of which the better feeling of government led them to remit. The result was, that the hero of Basque Roads was dismissed the navy, bereft of his honours, and driven into the service of the South American republics, where his exploits, of the most extraordinary and romantic character, powerfully contributed to destroy the last relics of the Spanish empire in that quarter, and establish the doubtful ascendancy of demo-

* In Basque Roads, a seaman, sitting by Lord Cochrane's side in the boat, was killed by a cannon-shot from one of the French vessels, when in the act of looking through a telescope at the enemy's fleet. Without saying a word, or averting his eye, Cochrane took the instrument out of the dead man's hand, and completed the observation.

cratic fervour. But in a free country no deed of injustice, whether popular or ministerial, can permanently blast a noble character. With the changes of time, the power which had oppressed England's greatest existing naval hero passed away: another generation succeeded, to which his exploits were an object of admiration, his weaknesses of forgiveness, his wrongs of commiseration. One of the most deservedly popular acts of the new ministry, which succeeded to the helm after the overthrow of the Tory administration, was to restore him to the rank and the honours of which he had been deprived; and there remains now, to the historian, only the grateful duty of lending his humble efforts to aid in rescuing from unmerited obloquy the victim of aristocratic, as he has frequently done those of popular injustice.*

The defeat and blockade of the French squadron in Basque Roads was quickly felt in the capture of the French West India islands, to relieve which was the object of its ill-fated sortie from Brest harbour. A British expedition sailed from Jamaica, and appeared off Martinique in the end of January. The landing was effected without any resistance; and the enemy having been defeated in a general action some days after, they were shut up in Fort Bourbon, the principal stronghold in the island, which shortly after surrendered at discretion, with three thousand men. This was followed, some months afterwards, by a successful descent on the colony and fortress of St Domingo, which, with two battalions of infantry, were taken by General Carmichael.¹ Cayenne was also reduced; so that, as Cuba and the other Spanish

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30.
Capture of
Martinique
and St Do-
mingo, in
the West
Indies.
Feb. 2.
Feb. 18.

July 2.
1 Ann. Reg.
228 and 461.
App. to
Chron.

* Lord Cochrane was tried for alleged accession to the Stock Exchange hoax, before a most able and powerful judge, Lord Ellenborough, and, being convicted, was sentenced to imprisonment and the pillory. There can be no doubt that the evidence tending to connect him with the facts charged was of a very strong, though chiefly of a circumstantial kind, and the judge was constrained to exhibit the case in an unfavourable light against the accused to the jury. Yet the author, after hearing Lord Cochrane deliver his defence in the House of Commons, on July 7, 1814, has never entertained a doubt of his innocence; and, even if the facts charged had been distinctly brought home to him, it

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settlements in those latitudes were now allied colonies, the French flag was entirely excluded from the West Indies.

31.
And of the
Isle of Bour-
bon in the
East.
Sept. 21.

The Isle of France in the Indian ocean was at the same time strictly blockaded, and, it was foreseen, must ere long capitulate; the Isle of Bourbon surrendered on the 21st September; the French settlement on the Senegal river, on the western coast of Africa, had fallen into the hands of the English; and preparations were making on a great scale for an attack on Batavia, and the important island of Java in the Indian archipelago. Thus, in every direction, the last distant settlements of Napoleon were falling into the hands of the British; and, at the time when the triumphant conclusion of the Austrian war seemed to give him the undisputed command of continental Europe, the maritime superiority of England was producing its natural results, in the successive acquisition of the whole colonies of the globe.¹

¹ Ann. Reg.
1809, 228,
and 429,
461. App.
to Chron.
Jom. ii. 296.

32.
Reduction
of the seven
Ionian
Islands.
Oct. 3.

Important success also attended the British arms, both by sea and land, in the Mediterranean. A powerful naval expedition was despatched in autumn, by Lord Collingwood, with sixteen hundred land troops on board, who, after a slight resistance, made themselves masters of the seven islands of Zante, Cephalonia, Corfu, &c., which were permanently placed under the protection and sway of Great Britain. The importance of this acquisition was not at that period perceived; but it was instantly felt by Napoleon, whose views for the prosecution of the maritime contest were essentially wound up with the extension of his naval power in the Archipelago. By giving Great

was surely a most unwarrantable stretch to sentence to the degrading punishment of the pillory so heroic a character, especially for a proceeding involving no moral turpitude, and rarely, if ever, before or since, made the object of punishment. This part of the sentence was immediately and most properly remitted by government; but the result of the trial hung heavy on the hero of Basque Roads in this country for twenty years afterwards. In 1847 he was, from the general sense now entertained of the injustice he had undergone, restored to his rank in the navy and to the honours of the Bath, with the unanimous approval of the nation.

Britain a permanent footing in the neighbourhood of Greece, and the command of Corfu, the finest harbour and strongest fortress in the Adriatic, it powerfully contributed in the end to counterbalance the influence of the cabinet of St Petersburg in that quarter, and may be regarded as the first step in a series of events linked together by a chain of necessary though unperceived connexion—the Greek Revolution—the battle of Navarino—the prostration of Turkey—the establishment of a Christian government in Greece—the subjugation of Persia by Russia—and the rapid extension of Muscovite influence in Khorassan. These events are destined, to all human appearance, in their ultimate consequences, to roll back to the East the tide of civilised conquest—array the powers of the West in fearful collision in Central Asia—and prepare, in the hostile efforts of European ambition, that general regeneration of the tropical regions, which, for mysterious purposes, Providence has hitherto prevented from taking place by the desolating sway of Mahometan power.¹

¹ Ann. Reg. 1809. Lord Collingwood's Despatch, Oct. 30, 1809. App. to Chron. 530, 531.

In conformity with the earnest desire expressed by the Austrian government, that a diversion of considerable magnitude should be attempted on the coast of Italy, an expedition was prepared in the Sicilian harbours in the course of this summer, to menace the coast of Naples. As usual, however, the British government were so tardy in their operations, that not only was ample time given to the enemy to prepare for his defence at the menaced points, but it was utterly impossible that the attempt could have any beneficial effect on the vital line of operations in the valley of the Danube. The fleet, having no less than fifteen thousand troops, half British and half Sicilian, on board, did not set sail from Palermo till the beginning of June ; that is to say, more than a month after the Archduke John had retired from Italy, and the theatre of contest between him and Eugene Beauharnais had been transferred to the Hungarian plains. It at first

33. Fruitless expedition of Sir J. Stuart against the coast of Naples.

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met with considerable success. The island of Ischia, which forms so conspicuous an object in the bay of Naples, was assaulted and carried by the British troops : Procida was next taken, close to the shore, with a flotilla of forty gun-boats, fifteen hundred prisoners, and a hundred pieces of cannon ; while a detachment of the English forces, landing in the straits of Messina, took possession of the castle of Scylla and the chain of fortified posts opposite to Sicily. These advantages had at first the effect of spreading a great alarm along the Neapolitan coast, and occasioning the recall of a considerable body of men whom Murat had detached to the support of the Viceroy ; but they led to no other or more durable result. This powerful British force, nearly as large as that which gained the battle of Vimeira, and which, if landed and skilfully brought into action, would probably have overthrown the whole army of Naples, was shortly after withdrawn without attempting anything farther, by the instructions of government, who intended this only as a diversion ; and the fortified posts at Scylla, after being several times taken and retaken, were at length abandoned to the enemy. This expedition, from its tardy appearance and inconsiderable exploits, could hardly be said to have contributed much to aid the common cause ; but, from the alarm which it diffused through the Italian peninsula, it had a powerful effect in accelerating the ecclesiastical revolution which has already been noticed, and may be regarded as the immediate cause of the arrest of the Pope, which in its ultimate effects produced such important results.¹

¹ Sir J. Stuart's Desp. June 5, 1809. App. to Chron. 457. Ann. Reg. Pel. iv. 41, 42.

34.
Brilliant success of Lord Collingwood in the Mediterranean. Oct. 30.

A maritime operation, attended with more decisive results, took place in autumn, in the bay of Genoa. A detachment of the Toulon fleet having put to sea, with a view to carry succours to the French troops in the bay of Rosas, which were cut off by the Spaniards from direct communication with their own country, they were immediately chased by Lord Collingwood, who blockaded that

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port ; and, after a hard pursuit, the ships of war were forced to separate from the convoy, and three ships of the line and one frigate driven ashore, where they were burned by their crews, to prevent them from falling into the hands of the British. Meanwhile the transports, under convoy of a frigate and some smaller armed ships, in all eleven vessels, having taken refuge in the bay of Rosas, under protection of the powerful castle and batteries there, deemed themselves beyond the reach of attack. In that situation, however, they were assailed by a detachment of the British fleet, under the orders of Captain Hallowell, who at once formed the daring resolution of cutting out the whole with the boats of the ships under his command. The arrangements for this purpose, made with the judgment and foresight which might have been expected from that distinguished hero of the Nile, were carried into effect by Lieutenant Tailour with a spirit and resolution above all praise. In sight of the fleet, the boats stretched out, the crews being at the highest point of animation, filling the air with their cheers : and rapidly advancing under a very heavy fire from the armed ships and batteries, carried the whole vessels in the most gallant style, and either burned or brought away them all. Brilliant, however, as these naval operations were, they had no decisive effect on the issue of the war. The maritime contest was already decided : at Trafalgar the dominion of the seas had finally passed to the British flag. It was at land that the real struggle now lay ; it was for the deliverance of other nations that England now fought ; it was on the soldiers of Wellington that the eyes of the world were turned.¹

¹ Lord Collingwood's Desp. Nov. 1. Capt. Hallowell, Nov. 1. Ann. Reg. 1809, 511, 515. App. to Chron.

After the retreat of the English to Corunna, and the fall of Madrid, affairs in the Peninsula appeared wellnigh desperate. In Portugal there was only a corps of eight thousand British soldiers, chiefly in and around Lisbon, upon whom any reliance could be placed. For though

35.
State of
affairs in
Portugal.
Atlas,
Plate 48.

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about six thousand men, under Silveira, lay in the northern provinces, and the Lusitanian legion, of half that amount, on the north-eastern frontier, under the able guidance of the gallant Sir R. Wilson, yet the composition of the forces of which these detachments consisted, recently embodied and not yet fully disciplined, was not such as to inspire any confidence as to their ability to contend with regular soldiers, or defend the country in the event of a fresh invasion. Their small numerical amount compelled Cradock, in the first instance, to concentrate his forces, which he did at Passa d'Arcos, close to the mouth of the Tagus, where he might be in a situation to embark with safety, if a serious invasion should be attempted. These dispositions, however, naturally spread the belief that the English were going to abandon the country, as they had done Galicia; and tumults broke out in various quarters, arising from the dread of this anticipated desertion. Towards the end of February, however, the arrival of six thousand men from England, under Sherbrooke and Mackenzie, having augmented Cradock's force to fourteen thousand, he was enabled to take a position in advance, covering the capital, at Sacavino, which soon, by reviving confidence, had the effect of removing the public apprehensions.¹

¹ Nap. ii.
142, 159.
Lond. i. 294,
295.

³⁶.
And in
Spain.

Affairs in Spain were still more unpromising. The army of Blake, which had suffered so severely at Espinosa and Reynosa, had dwindled away to eight or nine thousand ragged and half-starved troops, without either stores or artillery, who with difficulty maintained themselves in the Galician mountains: the remains of the soldiers of Aragon, about twenty thousand strong, had thrown themselves into Saragossa, where they were preparing to undergo a fresh siege. Castanos' men, who had come up from Andalusia, joined to some who had escaped from Somo-Sierra and Madrid, in all twenty-five thousand strong, were in la Mancha, and had their headquarters at Toledo; while ten or twelve thousand disorganised

levies at Badajoz formed a sort of guard for the Central Junta, who had established themselves in that city after the fall of Madrid. As to the new levies in Andalusia, Granada, and Valencia, they were as yet too ill-disciplined and remote from the scene of action to be capable of affording any efficient support to regular troops in the earlier periods of the campaign. And though, in Catalonia, there were at least fifty thousand brave men in possession of Gerona, Rosas, Taragona, Tortosa, Lerida, and a strong central range of mountains, yet they were fully occupied with the invaders in their own bounds, and, without either seeking succour from, or being able to afford succour to the neighbouring provinces, resolutely maintained on their own hills an independent hostility. The patriot forces numbered in all scarcely a hundred and twenty thousand men, scattered over the whole extent of the Peninsula, without either any means of uniting with each other, any central authority to which they all yielded obedience, or any common object to which they could simultaneously be applied. At Madrid, Joseph reigned with the apparent consent of the nation. Registers having been opened for the inscription of the names of those who were favourable to his government, no less than twenty-eight thousand heads of families in a few days enrolled themselves; and deputations from the municipal council, the council of the Indies, and all the incorporations, waited upon him at Valladolid, to entreat that he would return to the capital and reassume the royal functions, with which he at length complied.¹

On the other hand, the forces of Napoleon were much more formidable, both from the position which they occupied, and the number and quality of the troops of which they were composed. Instead of being spread out, like the English and Spanish hosts, round an immense circumference, without any means of communicating with or supporting each other, they were massed together in the

Jan. 22.
1 Lond. i.
294, 295.
Nap. ii. 4, 5.
Vict. et
Conq. xviii.
255, 257.
Tor. ii. 204,
205.

37.
Forces and
distribution
of the
French in
Spain.

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central parts of the kingdom, and possessed the inestimable advantage of an interior and comparatively short line of communication. The total French force in the Peninsula amounted, even after the Imperial Guard had departed for Germany, to two hundred and eighty thousand infantry, and forty thousand cavalry, of whom two hundred and forty thousand were present in the field with the eagles. Fifty thousand of this immense force protected the great line of communication with France, which was strengthened by three fortresses, and sixty-four fortified posts of correspondence; and the corps were so distributed that they could all support each other in case of need, or combine in any common operations. The northern provinces were parcelled out into military governments, the chiefs of which communicated with each other by means of movable columns, repressed any attempt at insurrection, and levied military contributions on the inhabitants, to the amount not only of all the wants of their respective corps, but in some cases including immense fortunes to themselves. Nearly the whole charges of this enormous force were extorted from the conquered provinces. Soult, with twenty-three thousand effective men, lay at Corunna, while Ney, with fourteen thousand, occupied Asturias and the northern coast; Lannes and Moncey, with two corps, about forty-eight thousand strong, were charged with the siege of Saragossa; Victor was in Estremadura with twenty-five thousand; Mortier, with as many, in the valley of the Tagus; Sebastiani, who had succeeded to the command of Lefebvre's corps, observed the enemy's forces in la Mancha; St Cyr, with forty thousand, was stationed in Catalonia; and Joseph, with twelve thousand guards, was at Madrid.¹

¹ Belmas, i. 37, 38. Imp. Must. Rolls, Nap. i. App. Nos. 1, 2.

The spirits of the Spaniards, which had been sunk to an extraordinary degree by the disasters of the preceding campaign, the capture of their capital, and the retreat of the English troops from Galicia, were first revived by the

intelligence of the treaty so opportunely and generously concluded by Great Britain, at the moment of their greatest depression, by which she engaged never to conclude a separate peace with Napoleon ; and by the resolution expressed in parliament by the ministers, notwithstanding the gloomy forebodings of the Opposition, never to abandon the cause of Spanish independence. These cheering announcements were speedily followed by deeds which clearly evinced an unabated resolution to maintain the contest. Measures were set on foot in Portugal, evidently preparatory to a protracted struggle. General Beresford had been appointed by the regency field-marshal in the Portuguese service, and intrusted with the arduous duty of training and directing the new levies in that kingdom. Twenty thousand of these troops were taken into British pay, placed under the direction of British officers, and admitted to all the benefits of British upright administration : the regency revived and enforced the ancient law of the monarchy, by which, in periods of peril, the whole male population capable of bearing arms were called out in defence of their country : numerous transports, filled with stores and muniments of war, daily arrived at Lisbon, which became a vast depot for the military operations of the kingdom. Finally, the landing of Sir Arthur Wellesley, with powerful reinforcements from England, was regarded at once as a pledge of sincerity in the cause, and the harbinger of yet higher glories than he had yet acquired. Reanimated by these vigorous steps on the part of their ally, not less than the breaking out of the Austrian war, and withdrawing of the Imperial Guard from the Peninsula, the Central Junta, which was now established at Seville, issued a spirited proclamation to their countrymen, in which, after recounting the propitious circumstances which were now appearing in their favour, they strongly recommended the general adoption of the guerrilla system of warfare,¹ and renewed their protestations

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38.Effect in the
Peninsula of
the English
treaty, and
resolution to
defend Por-
tugal and
stand by
Spain.

March 2.

April 17.
¹ See pro-
clamation in
Belmas, i.
App. No. 25.
App. Lond.
i. 294, 295.
Nap. ii. 142,
159.

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39.Prepara-
tions for
the siege of
Saragossa.Atlas,
Plate 49.

never to make peace while a single Frenchman polluted the Spanish territory.

Saragossa was the first place of note which was threatened by the French arms. The vicinity of that place to the frontier of the empire, its commanding situation on the banks of the Ebro, the valour of its inhabitants, and the renown which they had acquired by the successful issue of the last siege, all conspired to render its early reduction a matter of the highest interest to the Emperor. After the disastrous issue of the battle of Tudela, Palafox, with about fifteen thousand regular troops, had thrown himself into that city; but their number was soon augmented to thirty thousand, by the stragglers who had taken refuge there after that rout, to whom were soon joined fifteen thousand armed but undisciplined peasants, monks, and mechanics. The enthusiasm of this motley crowd was inconceivable; it recalled, in the nineteenth century, the days of Numantia and Saguntum. The citizens of the town were animated by the spirit of democratic freedom; the peasants of the country by that of devout enthusiasm; the monks by religious devotion; the soldiers by former glory—all by patriotic fervour. By a singular combination of circumstances, but one which frequently occurred during the Spanish war, the three great principles which agitate mankind—the spirit of religion, the fervour of equality, the glow of patriotism—were all called into action at the same time, and conspired to stimulate one common resistance. Thence the obstinate defence of Saragossa, and its deathless fame.¹

¹ Jom. iii.
125. Cav.
68, 69. Tor.
ii. 236, 237.

40.
Prepara-
tions which
had been
made for
the defence
of the place.

The defences of the place had been considerably strengthened since the former siege. The weak or ruined parts of the wall had been repaired, additional parapets erected in the most exposed situations, the suburbs included in new fortifications, barriers and trenches drawn across the principal streets, and the houses loopholed; so that, even if the rampart were

surmounted, a formidable resistance might be anticipated in the interior of the town. General Doyle, of the British service, had, ever since the termination of the first siege, been indefatigable in his efforts to strengthen the place. A large quantity of English muskets was distributed among the inhabitants; ammunition, stores, and provisions, were provided in abundance; the solid construction of the storehouses diminished to a considerable degree the chances of a successful bombardment; and one hundred and eighty guns, distributed on the ramparts, gave token of a much more serious resistance than on the last memorable occasion. Such was the confidence of the Aragonese in the strength of the ramparts of Saragossa, the unconquerable spirit of its garrison, and the all-powerful protection of Our Lady of the Pillar, that, on the approach of the French troops to invest the town, the peasants from all quarters flocked into it, burning with ardour and undaunted in resolution, so as to swell its defenders to fifty thousand men. But they brought with them, as occurred in Athens when besieged by the Lacedemonians, the seeds of a contagious malady, which among its now crowded dwellings spread with alarming rapidity, and in the end proved more fatal even than the sword of the enemy.¹

Palafox exercised an absolute authority over the city; and such was the patriotic ardour of the inhabitants, that all his orders for the public defence were obeyed without a moment's hesitation, even though involving the sacrifice of the most valuable property, or dearest attachments of the people. If a house in the neighbourhood was required to be demolished to make way for the fire of the ramparts, hardly was the order given than the proprietor himself levelled it with the ground. The shady groves, the delicious gardens in which the citizens so much delighted, were laid waste by the axe: in a few days the accumulated wealth of centuries disappeared in the environs of the town, before the breath

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¹ Cav. 74,
87. Tor. ii.
239, 240.
Jom. iii.
126, 127.
Belm. ii.
139, 140;
and Pièces
Just. i.

41.
Preparatory
dispositions
of Palafox.

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¹ Belm. ii.
143, 144.
Tor. ii. 238.
Cav. 77, 81.
Jones, i.
170.

42.
Forces of
the be-
siegers, and
progress of
the siege
before the
trenches
were
opened.
Dec. 20.
Dec. 22.

of patriotism. Palafox's provident care extended to every department, his spirit animated every rank ; but such was the ardour of the people that their voluntary supplies anticipated every requisition, and amply provided for the multitude now accumulated within the walls. Terror was summoned to the aid of loyalty, and the fearful engines of popular power, the scaffold and the gallows, were erected on the public square, where some unhappy wretches, suspected of a leaning to the enemy, were indignantly executed.¹

To attack a town defended by fifty thousand armed men, animated by such a spirit, was truly a formidable undertaking ; but the forces which Napoleon put at the disposal of his generals were adequate to the enterprise. Two strong corps, numbering together forty-three thousand combatants,* present with the eagles, were placed under the command of Marshals Monecy and Mortier ; and the operations of the siege began in good earnest in the middle of December. The fortified outpost of Torrero was carried after a slight resistance, the garrison having withdrawn into the town ; but an assault, two days afterwards, upon the suburb in the same quarter, though at first successful, was finally repulsed with great slaughter by Palafox, who hastened to the menaced

* Colonel Napier (*Peninsular War*, ii. 25) says, that the besieging force was only 35,000 ; but this is a mistake, as the numbers proved by the Imperial Muster-Rolls, published by order of the French government, were as follows :—

Third corps—Junot's—Infantry and	{		
Cavalry,	{	.	22,473
Artillery,		.	788
Fifth corps—Mortier's—Infantry and	{		
Cavalry,	{	.	22,607
Artillery,		.	1,660
Heavy artillery, officers and men,		.	542
Engineers' establishment,		.	1,017
Total,			49,087

Of the Third corps, only sixteen thousand five hundred of the infantry and cavalry were employed in the siege, the remainder being devoted to keeping up the communications ; making the force actually employed in the siege forty-three thousand men.—See BELMAS, *Journaux des Sièges dans la Péninsule*, vol. ii. 333, 339 ; an official work of great accuracy and splendour.

point, and by his example powerfully contributed to restore the day. An honourable capitulation was then proposed by Mortier, accompanied with the intimation that Madrid had fallen, and the English were retiring before Napoleon to their ships. But even this disheartening intelligence had no effect upon the resolution of the brave governor, who replied, that if Madrid had fallen, it was because it had been sold, but that the ramparts of Saragossa were still untouched, and he would bury himself and his soldiers under its ruins rather than capitulate. Despairing now of effecting an accommodation, the French marshals completed the investment of the town on both sides of the river; and the parallels being at length considerably advanced, a powerful fire was opened on the walls, especially on the convents of the Augustines, the Capuchins, and Santa Engracia, the only structures resembling bastions in their whole circumference.¹

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Dec. 30.

¹ Jones, i.
171, 173.
Tor. ii. 241,
242. Cav.
91, 93.
Belm. ii.
153, 163.

Marshal Junot arrived and took the command of the besieging force on the 2d January. Every day and night thereafter was signalised by bloody combats. Sorties were daily attempted by the Spanish troops, and sometimes with success. But in spite of all their efforts the progress of the besiegers was sensible, and, by the middle of January, almost all the fortified posts outside the rampart had fallen into their hands. The feeble parapet of the wall was soon levelled by the French cannon; and the heroic Spanish gunners had no defence but bags of earth, which the citizens replaced as fast as they were shattered by the enemy's shot, joined to their own unconquerable courage. The *tête-de-pont* of the Huerba was carried with very little loss; and though the bridge itself was blown up by the besieged, the enemy made their way across the stream, and from fifty-five pieces of heavy cannon thundered on the mouldering rampart, which in that place was so dilapidated as to give way after a few hours' battering. But, meanwhile, the Span-

43.
Assault and
fall of all the
external
fortified
posts.

Jan. 15.

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iards were not idle. Every inch of ground was resolutely contested, and the most extraordinary means were taken to keep up the spirits of the besieged. A report was spread by the generals, and gained implicit credence, that the Emperor had been defeated, several of the marshals killed, and that Don Francisco Palafox, brother to the commander-in-chief, was approaching with a powerful army to raise the siege. In truth, Don Philippe Perena, a guerilla leader, had succeeded in drawing together six thousand peasants, with whom he kept the field in Aragon, and disquieted the rear of the French army. And although neither the numbers nor composition of this force was such as to give them any serious alarm, the knowledge of its existence had a surprising effect in supporting the efforts of the besieged, who now stood much in need of such encouragement, from the crowded condition of the population shut up within the narrow circle of the old walls, and the fearful ravages which contagious maladies were making among the indigent and suffering multitude, driven into crowded cellars to avoid the terrible and incessant fire of the enemy's bombs and cannon-shot.¹

¹ Belm. ii.
163, 204.
Nap. ii. 81.
Tor. ii. 243,
244. Cav.
93, 101.
Rogn. 22, 24.

44.
Storming of
the convents
of Santa
Engracia
and the
Capuchins
in the ram-
parts.

Jan. 27.

Matters were in this state when Marshal Lannes arrived, intrusted by Napoleon, who was dissatisfied with the progress made, with the general direction of the siege, and the command of both the corps employed in its prosecution. The influence of his master-mind speedily appeared in the increased energy of the attacks, and more thorough co-operation of the troops engaged in the undertaking. Several nocturnal sorties attempted by the Spaniards to retard their progress towards the convent of Santa Engracia, which itself formed a prominent part of the wall towards the river, having failed to stop the besiegers, an assault on that quarter was ordered by Marshal Lannes on the 27th at noon. Two practicable breaches had been made in that quarter, and a third nearer the centre of the town, in the convent of

Santa Engracia. The tolling of the great bell of the new tower warned the Saragossans of the approach of the enemy, and all instantly hastened to the post of danger. Hardly had they arrived when the assaulting columns appeared at the breaches: vast crowds of daring men issued from the trenches, and with loud shouts rushed on to the attack. Such was the vigour of the assault that, after a hard struggle, the French, though twice repulsed, at length succeeded in making themselves masters of the convent of St Joseph; while, in the centre, the attacking column at Santa Engracia, after reaching the summit of the breach, was hurled headlong to its foot by a gallant effort of the Spanish soldiers. Returning again, however, with redoubled vigour to the charge, they not only penetrated, but made themselves masters of the adjoining convent, where, in spite of the efforts of the besieged to dispossess them, they maintained themselves till evening. All night the tocsin rang incessantly to call the citizens to the scene of danger, and devoted crowds rushed with indomitable courage to the very mouth of the enemy's guns; but though they fought from every house and window with the most desperate resolution, they could not drive the assailants from the posts they had won.¹

The walls of Saragossa had now gone to the ground; and an ordinary garrison, having lost its military defences, would never have thought of prolonging the contest. But the valour of the inhabitants remained; and from the ruins of all regulated or acknowledged modes of defence emerged the redoubtable warfare of the people. On the very next day the commander of their engineers, San Genis, a man of equal professional skill and resolution, fell on the battery of Palafox. Though his manners were gentle, yet he had the true spirit of a soldier, and often said, "It is needless ever to cite me to a council of war in which there is to be a question of capitulating: my opinion is, we can, under all circumstances, defend

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¹ Belm. ii.
218, 227.
Cav. 103,
105. Tor.
ii. 246, 247.
Nap. ii. 34,
37.

45.
Obstinate
defence of
the town
after the
walls were
taken.

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Jan. 28.

Feb. 2.
 1 Cav. 107,
 111. Tor.
 ii. 247, 248.
 Nap. ii. 37,
 38. Belm.
 ii. 226, 277.
 Rogn. 26,
 30.

46.
 Slow pro-
 gress of the
 assailants.

Feb. 2.

ourselves." The French chief of engineers, la Coste, a young man of similar acquirements and valour, perished at the same time; but the loss of their skilled talents was now of little moment. The dreadful war from house to house had commenced, in which individual courage more than directing talent was required. No sooner was it discovered that the enemy had effected a lodgment within the walls, than the people assembled in crowds in every house and building near the structures which they occupied, and kept up so incessant a fire on the assailants that for some days Lannes deemed it not advisable to provoke an open combat, but to confine his efforts to strengthening the posts he had won, and preparing the way for farther progress by the more certain methods of sap and mine. Meanwhile the passions of the people were roused to the very highest pitch by the dread of treason or any accommodation with the enemy; and popular vehemence, overwhelming all the restraints of law or order, sacrificed, almost every night, persons to the blind suspicions of the multitude, who were found hanging in the morning on gallows erected in the Cosso and market-place.¹

The enemy's efforts were directed chiefly against the convents of San Augustin and Santa Monaca, and a breach having been effected in their walls, they were carried by assault; but the assailants, having endeavoured, after this success, to penetrate into the principal street of the Cosso, were repulsed with great slaughter. Every house, every room in the quarters where the attack was going on with most vehemence, became the theatre of mortal combat. As the original assailants and defenders were killed or wounded, others were hurried forward to the spot. The dead and the dying lay heaped upon each other to the height of several feet above the ground; but, mounting on this ghastly pile, the undaunted foemen still maintained the fight for hours together, with such obstinacy that no progress could be made on either side; and not unfrequently, while still fast locked in the deadly struggle,

the whole—dead, dying, and combatants—were together blown into the air by the explosion of the mines beneath. Yet even these awful catastrophes were turned by the besieged to their advantage: the ruined walls afforded no protection to the French soldiers; and, from the adjoining windows, the Aragonese marksmen brought down, with unerring aim, every hostile figure that appeared among the ruins.¹

Taught by these dangers, the French engineers diminished the charge of powder in their mines, so as to blow up the inside of the houses only, without throwing down the external walls; and in these half-ruined edifices they maintained themselves, and pushed on fresh mines and attacks. Still, however, the convents and churches remained in the hands of the Spaniards; and as long as these massy structures were garrisoned by their undaunted troops, the progress of the French was not only extremely slow, but liable to continual disaster from the sallies, often successful, of the besieged, and the countermines with which they thwarted the progress of the subterraneous attacks. Disheartened by this murderous, and apparently interminable warfare, which continued without intermission, night and day, for three weeks, the French soldiers began to murmur at their lot; they almost despaired of conquering a city where every house was defended like a citadel, where every street could be won only by torrents of blood, and victory was attained only by destruction; the wounded, the sick, had fearfully thinned their ranks; and that depression was rapidly spreading amongst them which is so often the forerunner of the greatest calamities. “Scarce a fourth of the town,” said they, “is won, and we are already exhausted. We must wait for reinforcements, or we shall all perish among these ruins, which will become our own tombs before we can force the last of these fanatics from the last of their dens.”²

But while depression was thus paralysing the arm of the besiegers, the miseries of the besieged were incom-

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¹ Rogn. 34,
37. Cav.
113, 118.
Belm. ii.
227, 240.

47.
Despair
begins to
spread
among the
French
soldiers.

² Belm. ii.
227, 266.
Nap. ii. 39,
40. Rogniat,
34, 39. Cav.
113, 123.

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48.Miseries to
which the
besieged
were ex-
posed from
pestilence.

parably greater. The incessant shower of bombs and cannon-balls which fell upon the town, had for a month past obliged the whole inhabitants, not actually combat- ing, to take refuge in the cellars; and the close confine- ment of so vast a multitude in these narrow and gloomy abodes, joined to the failure of provisions, and mental depression springing from the unbounded calamities with which they were surrounded, induced a terrible fever, which was now making the most dreadful ravages. What between the devastations of the epidemic and the sword of the enemy, several thousands, in the middle of February, were dying every day; room could not be found in the charnel-houses for such a multitude of bodies, and the living and dead were shut up together in these sub- terraneous abodes; while the roar of artillery, the explosion of mines, the crash of falling houses, the flames of conflagration, and the alternate shouts and cries of the com- batants, shook the city night and day without intermission above their heads. Happy those who expired amidst this scene of unutterable wo! yet even they bequeathed with their last breath to the survivors the most solemn injunc- tions to continue to the last this unparalleled struggle; and from these dens of the living and the dead issued daily crowds of warriors, attenuated, indeed, and livid, but who maintained, with unconquerable resolution, a desperate resistance. But human nature, even in its most exalted mood, cannot go beyond a certain point. Sara- gossa was about to fall; but, like Numantia and Saguntum, she was to leave a name immortal in the annals of man- kind.¹

¹ Belm. ii.
267, 277.
Cav. 129,
131. Rogn.
38, 42. Tor.
249, 250.

49.
Heroic
deeds of the
women of
Saragossa.

Such was the heroic spirit which animated the inhabi- tants, that it inspired even the softer sex to deeds of valour. Among these Augustina Zaragoza was peculiarly distinguished. She had served with unshaken courage a cannon near the gate of Portillo at the former siege, and she again took her station there when the enemy returned. "See, general!" said she to Palafox when he visited that

quarter, "I am again with my old friend." Her husband being struck by a cannon-ball as he served the battery, she calmly stepped into his place, and pointed the gun as he lay bleeding at her side. Frequently she was to be seen at the head of an assaulting party, wrapped in her cloak, sword in hand, cheering on the soldiers to the discharge of their duty. She was at length taken prisoner; but being taken dangerously ill, and carried to the French hospital, she contrived to escape. A female corps was formed to carry provisions and water to the combatants, and remove the wounded, at the head of which was Donna Benita, a lady of rank. Several hundred women and children perished during the siege, not by bombs or cannon-shot, but in actual combat.^{1*}

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¹ Ric, 220,
221. South.
ii. 200.

Marshal Lannes, unshaken by the murmurs of his troops, was indefatigable in his endeavours to prosecute the siege to a successful issue. He pointed out to them, with justice, that the losses of the besieged greatly exceeded their own, and that, even if the fierceness of their defence should continue unabated, their destruction must speedily ensue from the united ravages of famine and pestilence. Meanwhile, intelligence arrived of the evacuation of Galicia by the English, and various successes in other parts of Spain; and these advices having somewhat elevated their spirits, a general assault took place on the 18th on both banks of the Ebro. The division Gazan burst with irresistible violence into the suburb on the left bank, which the Spaniards had hitherto held; and, pushing on to the convent of St Lazar, which stood on

50.
Able efforts
and successes
of Marshal
Lannes
on the left
of the Ebro.
Feb. 18.

* "E già tra' merli a comparir non tarda
Lo stuol fugace che 'l timor caccionne.
E mirando la vergine gagliarda,
Vero amor della patria arma le donne.
Correr le vedi e collocarsi in guarda,
Con chiome sparse e con succinte gonne;
E lanciar dardi, e non mostrar paura
D' esporre il petto per l' amate mura."

TASSO, *Ger. Lib.* xi. 58.

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the water's edge, after a bloody repulse, made good their entrance through an enormous breach which their artillery had made in its walls. This important acquisition rendered the suburb no longer tenable ; and its brave defenders were forced to retreat across the bridge into the town. Part effected their object, amidst a terrific fire of grape, bombs, and musket-shot, which raked them from both sides in rushing through the perilous defile ; the remainder, to the number of fifteen hundred, after vainly endeavouring to cut their way through the dense masses of the enemy, were surrounded, and, having exhausted their ammunition, were made prisoners. This was a fatal blow to the Spaniards. Fifty pieces of heavy artillery, placed in the abandoned suburb, played across the Ebro on the defenceless houses on the quay, and soon laid them in ruins. Before the besieged could recover from their consternation, Lannes commenced a furious assault on the monastery of the Trinity, near the University ; and, after a vain attempt to carry it by open force, the assailants succeeded in making good their entrance during the confusion occasioned by the explosion of a petard. At the same time, a mine, charged with sixteen hundred pounds of powder, exploded with a terrific shock near the Comic Theatre ; and six mines had been run under the street of the Cosso, each of which was charged with three thousand pounds of powder, more than sufficient to lay that part of the city in ruins, and expose naked and defenceless all those quarters which were still held by the patriots.¹

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xviii.
291, 293.
Cav. 137,
139. Tor.
ii. 251, 252.
Nap. ii. 44,
45. Belm.
ii. 308, 317.
Rogniat, 42,
45.

51.
Capitula-
tion of Sara-
gossa.
Feb. 20.

Happily it was not necessary to have recourse to that extremity. Palafox, who, from the commencement of the siege, had discharged with heroic resolution the duties of a commander-in-chief, and, though laid prostrate for nearly a month by the prevailing epidemic, still held the keys of the city in his grasp, now perceived that further resistance was fruitless. His brother, Don Francisco, had not only been unable to throw succours into

the place, but had been driven off to a distance, and the troops despatched against him had returned to reinforce the besieging host : the malignant fever daily made great ravages, among both the troops and the inhabitants ; hardly nine thousand of the former remained capable of bearing arms, and the latter were diminished in a still greater proportion ; there were neither hospitals for the thousands of sick who crowded the city, nor medicines for their relief. In these circumstances, this noble chief, who was so reduced by fever as to be unable any longer to bear the burden of the command, and yet knew that, as soon as the ascendant of his character was no longer felt, the resistance could not be prolonged, took the resolution to send his aide-de-camp to Lannes to negotiate for a capitulation.¹

The terms he contended for were, that the garrison should march out with the honours of war, and be allowed to retire to the nearest Spanish army : but these proposals were, of course, rejected, and Lannes at first would only consent to protect the women and children. Don Pedro Ric, who, in the name of the junta of Saragossa, was intrusted with the negotiation, replied with great spirit, "That would be delivering us to the mercy of the enemy : if that be the case, Saragossa will continue to defend herself, for she has still weapons, ammunition, and, above all, hands." Fearful of driving to desperation a body of men of whose prowess he had recently had such ample proof, the French marshal upon this agreed to a capitulation, by which it was stipulated that the garrison should march out the following morning with the honours of war, and be conveyed as prisoners of war into France ; the officers retaining their swords, horses, and baggage, and the soldiers their knapsacks ; that private property and public worship should be respected, and the armed peasants dismissed. Situated as the besieged were, these terms could not be regarded but as eminently favourable, and an enduring monument of their heroic constancy.² But such

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Feb. 19.
¹ Cav. 143,
157. Rog-
niat, 47, 52.
Ric, 230,
231.52.
Terms of
the capitulation.² Cav. 143,
147. Rog-
niat, 47, 52.
Tor. 252,
253. Don
Pedro Ric,
230, 231.

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1809.

53.
Hideous ap-
pearance of
the town
when sur-
rendered.
Losses on
both sides.

was the spirit which still animated the people, that they murmured loudly at any capitulation ; and it was with difficulty that the ruling junta prevented an insurrection during the night, for the purpose of continuing the contest till the last extremity.

On the following day at noon, twelve thousand men, for the most part pale, emaciated, and livid in hue, marched out, and having surrendered their arms, which they had hardly strength left to hold, to their courageous enemies, were sent into the besiegers' camp, where they received the rations of which they stood so much in need. The French troops then marched into the town ; and never had such a spectacle before been exhibited in modern times. Six thousand dead bodies still lay unburied in the streets, among the fragments of buildings or around the churches. Half the houses were in ruins ; infants were striving in vain to get nutriment from their dying mothers ; from the vaults and subterraneous rooms a few squalid persons of both sexes, like ghosts, were issuing, drawing the corpses, hardly distinguishable save by their stillness from the persons who bore them. The pestilence spread almost visibly from those living charnel-houses, alike on friend and foe around. Fifty-four thousand human beings had perished during the siege, of whom only six thousand were killed by the sword or fire of the enemy : the awful plague had carried off the rest. Sixteen thousand sick, for the most part in a dying state, encumbered the town when hostilities ceased, and filled every quarter with wo. The French had three thousand killed and twelve thousand wounded during the struggle.* Fifty days of open trenches had been borne by a town defended by nothing but a

* Rogniat says the French loss was three thousand only, but without specifying whether it was killed, or killed and wounded ; and it seems clear that it was the former only—an obscurity which has misled many later writers. It is incredible that forty-three thousand French, headed by Lannes, should have been arrested for fifty days of open trenches, and six weeks of desperate conflicts from house to house, by a resistance which cost them only three thousand

single wall ; half that time the contest had continued with more than forty thousand besiegers after that feeble defence had fallen, and the town, in a military sense, was taken. Thirty-three thousand cannon-shot, and sixteen thousand bombs, had been thrown into the place ; yet at the close of the siege the assailants were only masters of a fourth of the town ; thirteen convents and churches had been taken, but forty remained to be forced. It was domestic pestilence, not foreign arms, which subdued Saragossa. Modern Europe has not so memorable a siege to recount ; and to the end of the world, it will stand forth in undecaying lustre, a monument of heroic devotion, which will thrill the hearts of the brave and the generous throughout every succeeding age.¹

The lustre which the French arms justly acquired by the energy and perseverance which they had displayed during this memorable siege, was much tarnished by the cruel and rapacious conduct of the chiefs by whom it had been concluded. Don Basilio Boggiero, the former tutor and present friend of Palafox, who was watching beside that heroic chief's bedside to administer to him the last consolations of religion, was, by the express commands of Lannes, three days after the capitulation, dragged at midnight out of the sick-chamber, and, along with Don Santiago Sas, another courageous chaplain, who had been distinguished alike by his bravery in the former and the present siege, bayoneted on the banks of the Ebro, and their dead bodies thrown into the river. The French had the cruelty to exact from the wo-struck city of Saragossa, immediately after their entry, a contribution of fifty thousand pairs of shoes, and eight thousand pairs of boots, with medicines and every other requisite for an hospital ; a service of china and fitting up for a tennis-court were

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¹ Belm. ii.
318, 327.
Cav. 148,
149. Don.
Pedro Ric,
232. Sche-
peler, ii.
196. South.
ii. 198, 199.

54.
Cruel use
which the
French gen-
erals made
of their
victory.

men.—See ROGNAT, 49, 51 ; and SCHEPELER, *Hist. de la Guerre d'Espagne*, ii. 195, 196. In fact, we have the authority of Suchet for the assertion, that Junot's corps in May, which, at the commencement of the siege, was twenty-three thousand strong, could only muster ten thousand men at its termination.—SUCHET, ii. 14, 15.

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1809.

¹ Tor. ii.
371. D'Abr.
xii. 221.² D'Abr. xii.
213, 221.³ Ric, 249.
D'Abr. xii.
213, 214.
Tor. ii. 253,
254. South.
ii. 201, 204.55.
Submission
of the whole
of Aragon.⁴ South. ii.
201. Vict.
et Conq.
xviii. 296.
Schepeler,
ii. 226, 227.

demanded for the particular use of Marshal Junot. The church of Our Lady of the Pillar, one of the richest in Spain, was rifled by Marshal Lannes of jewels to the enormous amount of 4,687,000 francs, or £184,000, the whole of which he carried with him into France,¹ to the infinite mortification of Madame Junot, who conceived her husband had an equal right to the precious spoil, and who has, in her vexation,² revealed the whole details of the disgraceful spoliation.* By way of striking terror into the monks, some of them were enclosed in sacks and thrown at night into the Ebro, whose waters threw them ashore in the morning, to the utter horror of the inhabitants; while Palafox himself, who was at the point of death when the city surrendered, was conducted a close prisoner into France the moment he was able to travel, in defiance of a promise by Lannes to Ric, that he should be permitted to retire wherever he chose.³ †

The whole moral as well as physical strength of Aragon having been concentrated in Saragossa, its fall drew after it the immediate submission of the rest of the province. The important fortress of Jaca, commanding the chief pass from that province through the Pyrenees into France, surrendered, with its garrison of two thousand men, a few days after the capital had fallen. Benasque, and some other places of lesser note, followed the example; and before Marshal Lannes was summoned by Napoleon,⁴ in the middle of March, to join the Grand Army in

* The clergy at first offered a third of the treasure, but this was refused by Lannes, who insisted upon the whole. Marshal Mortier, with a true soldier's honour, refused any part of the plunder.—D'ABRANTES, xii. 221.

† Colonel Napier, after mentioning, what is correct, that for a month before the siege terminated, Palafox had been constantly in a bomb-proof cellar, adds, (ii. 82,) that "there is too much reason to believe that he and others of both sexes lived in a state of sensuality, forming a disgusting contrast to the wretchedness which surrounded them." No authority is quoted for this assertion, and the author can discover none in any other historian. On the contrary, Cavalero, the Spanish chief of engineers of the siege, says—"Le général-en-chef, qui depuis un mois n'était pas sorti de son caveau, avait été atteint de la terrible maladie; il pouvait à peine veiller aux soins de son gouvernement. Il sentit

Bavaria, the conquest of the whole province, in a military sense, had been so far completed, that nothing remained for Junot, who continued in command in that quarter; and preparations were commenced for an expedition against Valencia.

While these important operations were destroying all the elements of resistance in Aragon, Catalonia was becoming the theatre of a sanguinary warfare. At the close of the glorious successes of the preceding campaign, when Duhesme, as already noticed, had withdrawn to Barcelona after the failure before Gerona, there remained to the French in that province only that important fortress, garrisoned by eight thousand men, and the citadel of Figueras, by four thousand.¹ Napoleon, however, had no intention of allowing the eastern gate of Spain to slip from his grasp; and even while the first siege of Gerona was still going forward, he was collecting a fresh corps at Perpignan to relieve those who were shut up in Barcelona, and confided the direction of it to Marshal St-Cyr. That accomplished officer took the command in the end of October. Napoleon's parting words to him were brief but characteristic:—"Preserve Barcelona for me; if it is lost, I cannot retake it with eighty thousand men." St-Cyr crossed the frontier on the 5th November, and advanced towards ROSAS, the siege of which he immediately commenced. His forces consisted at first of thirty thousand men, though they were some months afterwards augmented to forty-eigh thousand; but they were

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56.
Operations
in Catalonia
under St-
Cyr.
—
Atlas,
Plate 48.

¹ *Ante*, ch.
liv. § 48.

Nov. 5.

son affaiblissement, et sachant bien que la place ne résisterait pas longtemps lorsque l'ascendant de son caractère ne soutiendrait plus l'énergie des Saragossans, il envoya son aide-de-camp proposer au Duc de Montebello une capitulation."—CAVALLERO, 140. And Toreno adds, "*Le général (Palafox) fut emporté mourant de Saragosse, où l'on ne tarda pas à le rapporter à cause de l'extrême faiblesse dans laquelle il se trouvait.*"—TORENO, *Hist. de la Guerre en Espagne*, ii. 254. Colonel Jones of the British engineers observes, "Granting the palm of skill and science to the besiegers, as seems their due, it cannot be doubted, that while heroic self-devotion, unshaken loyalty, and exalted patriotism are held in estimation among mankind, the name of Palafox, blended with that of Saragossa, will be immortal."—JONES'S *Sieges of the Peninsula*, i. 183.

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a motley group of Italians, Germans, and Swiss, upon some of whom little reliance could be placed, and the marshal felt great discouragement at entering with such a force a mountainous province, where eighty thousand men were said to be in arms. But his forebodings were in a great degree groundless: the patriot force in the province was by no means in the brilliant condition which the Spanish journals represented. To the first burst of patriotic exertion had succeeded the usual depressing reaction when the effort is over, and the necessity for sustained sacrifices and organised armies is felt. Great part of the peasants had returned to their homes; the local juntas were disunited, and had, in a considerable degree, fallen into incapable hands. A large part of the prodigal supplies of England had been embezzled or misapplied by the cupidity of the Spanish agents, to whom they had been consigned; while the English co-operation from Sicily, which was anxiously looked for, had been intercepted, by demonstrations of Murat against Sicily, which had the effect of retaining Sir John Stuart and ten thousand British troops in that island.¹

¹Nap.ii. 54,
61. St-Cyr,
Guerre en
Catalogne,
19, 30. Tor.
ii. 223, 224.
Colling.
Mem. ii.
315.

57.
Siege of
Rosas.

Rosas, however, was too strong a place to fall without a vigorous resistance, and it was supported by means of defence such as rarely fell to the lot of the Spanish besieged cities. The Excellent, of seventy-four guns, with two bomb-vessels, lay in the bay within cannon-shot of the town. Lord Cochrane came up in his frigate, the Imperieuse, in the middle of the siege; and the fortifications, though old, were regular and respectable. The citadel and the fort of Trinidad, a mile and a quarter distant, were the strongest points, though they were both commanded by the mountains rising above the town, and the garrison consisted of nearly three thousand men. The town, which was hardly fortified, was soon taken; but the citadel and Fort Trinidad made a stout resistance. Heavy guns were at length brought up close to the latter, and a large breach made in the ramparts, upon which

Nov. 27.

the Spanish governor declared the post no longer tenable. But Lord Cochrane, who had just arrived, and to whose ardent spirit such scenes of danger were an actual enjoyment, immediately threw himself into it, and by his courage and resources prolonged a defence which otherwise would have been altogether desperate. Two assaults were repulsed by this intrepid officer and his undaunted seamen with very great slaughter. Meanwhile, however, a practicable breach was effected in the citadel; and a sally, attempted on the night of the 3d, having failed to arrest the progress of the besiegers, the place surrendered with its garrison, still two thousand four hundred strong, on the following day; but Lord Cochrane succeeded in getting the whole garrison of Fort Trinidad in safety on board his vessel.¹

CHAP.
LXI.1809.
Nov. 30.

Dec. 3.

¹ St-Cyr, 41,
51. Nap. ii.
61, 65. Tor.
ii. 227, 228.

Having his line of retreat and communication in some degree secured by this success, St-Cyr moved on to the relief of Barcelona, where General Duhesme, with eight thousand men, was shut up by the Spanish armies, and reduced to great straits for want of provisions and military stores. It has been already mentioned,² that two roads lead from Perpignan to Barcelona; one going through Hostalrich and Gerona, and the other by Rosas and the sea-coast. To avoid the destructive fire of the English cruisers, St-Cyr chose the mountain road; trusting to his resources and skill to discover some path through the hills, which might avoid the fire of the first of these fortresses. On arriving at the point of danger, a shepherd discovered an unguarded path by which Hostalrich might be turned, which was accordingly done, though not without a very harassing opposition from the Spanish light troops. Next day, however, after the circuitous march was over, and he had regained the great road, he encountered the main body of the Spanish army under Vivas and Reding, who had collected fourteen thousand men, half regulars, and half armed peasants, in a strong position at Cardaden, to bar his progress;³

58.
Attempts of
the French
for the re-
lief of Bar-
celona.² *Ante*, ch.
liv. § 49.

Dec. 15.

Dec. 16.
³ Tor. ii. 232.
Cabanes, c.
11. St-Cyr,
62, 68. Nap.
ii. 71, 72.

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1809.

while seven thousand men, under Lazan, who had issued from Gerona, hung upon his rear, and Milans, with four thousand men, supported by clouds of Somatenes, or armed peasants, infested the wooded hills on either flank.

59.
Battle of
Cardaden,
and defeat
of the
Spaniards.

The French force on the spot was fifteen thousand infantry and thirteen hundred horse, while the whole Spanish troops, if collected together, even after providing for the blockade of Barcelona, would have exceeded forty thousand, stationed in a rocky and wooded country, traversed only by narrow defiles—a situation of all others the most favourable for irregular or half-disciplined troops. Napoleon, in such circumstances, would have raised the blockade of Barcelona, as he did that of Mantua in 1796, and fallen with his whole force on the invader, who could scarcely have escaped destruction—a result which might have changed the whole fate of the campaign. But Vivas was not Napoleon, and the Spanish generals deemed no such concentration of all their means necessary. Elated with their advantages, they anticipated an easy victory, and were already, in imagination, renewing the triumphs of Baylen. St-Cyr, however, soon showed he was very different from Dupont. Uniting his troops into one solid mass, with orders to march firmly on, without firing a shot, he bore down with such vigour on the enemy's centre, that in half an hour they were totally defeated, with the loss of five hundred killed and two thousand wounded, besides all their artillery and ammunition. Lazan and Milans came up just when the action was over, and instantly retired to the shelter of Gerona and the mountains. Arrived two hours sooner, they might have inspired hesitation in the enemy's column, given time for their whole forces to come up, and Cardaden had been a second Baylen.¹

¹ Nap. ii. 71,
73. Tor. ii.
232, 233. St
Cyr, 62, 72.
Cabanes, p.
3, c. 11.

Nothing now remained to prevent the relief of Barcelona by St-Cyr, which was effected the day after, and the junction of Duhesme with his troops completed. The

Spaniards had been so thoroughly dispersed by their defeat, that the general-in-chief, Vivas, had escaped by a cross mountain-path on board one of the English cruisers; and Reding, the second in command, who was left in command of the fugitives, could with difficulty, two days afterwards, rally ten thousand foot and nine hundred horse to the south of Barcelona. In a few days, however, these troops swelled to twenty thousand men, and took post at Molinos del Rey, where, at daybreak on the 21st, they were attacked by St-Cyr with such vigour, that in half an hour they were totally routed, and dispersed in every direction. Such was the swiftness of their flight that few were killed or wounded; but twelve hundred were made prisoners, and all their magazines, stores, ammunition, and artillery, fell into the hands of the victors. Among these were fifty pieces of cannon, three millions of cartridges, sixty thousand pounds of powder, and a magazine containing thirty thousand stand of English arms. The whole open country was, after this great defeat, abandoned by the Spaniards: twelve thousand took refuge in the utmost disorder in Tarragona, while five thousand fled to the mountains in the interior, where they conferred the command on Reding, who, undismayed by so many disasters, immediately commenced, with unshaken constancy, the reorganisation of his tumultuary forces. But the discouragement of the province was extreme; and Lord Collingwood, who, from the British fleet off the coast, took a cool survey of the state of affairs, at once saw through the exaggerated accounts of the Spanish authorities, and declared that the elements of resistance in that province were all but dissolved.¹

CHAP.
LXI.1809.
60.Defeat of the
Spaniards
at Molinos
del Rey.

Dec. 21.

¹ Lord Collingwood to R. Adair, Feb. 2, 1809, Mem. ii. 315. Nap. ii. 75, 77. Tor. ii. 235, 236. St-Cyr, 79, 89. Cab. p. 3, c. 12.

These disasters in Catalonia powerfully accelerated the fall of Saragossa, by extinguishing the only force from which any relief to its distressed garrison could have been obtained. Thus far, therefore, the successes of St-Cyr had been most signal, and the immediate reduction

CHAP.
LXI.1809.
61.

Reding's
plan of a
general
attack on
the enemy
to clear the
way for
Saragossa.

of the province might reasonably have been expected. But that able commander experienced, in his turn, the exhausting effects of this interminable warfare, for which, in every age, the Spaniards have been so remarkable. While he lay at Villa Franca refitting his troops, and forming a park of artillery out of the spoils captured from the enemy, the Spaniards recovered from their consternation, and in several guerilla combats regained in some degree their confidence in engaging the enemy. The junta at Tarragona, elected from the democratic party during the first tumult of alarm and revolt consequent on the defeat of Molinos del Rey, displayed the utmost vigour. Preparations for defence were made on such a scale as precluded all hope of a successful siege; and the confluence of disbanded soldiers who had escaped from the rout soon raised the force within the walls to twenty thousand men, while an equal force at Gerona and in the intervening mountains debarred the French all access into the hilly region to the westward. But a perception of their strength, notwithstanding all the disasters they had experienced, again proved fatal to the Spaniards; the cry for succour from Saragossa met with a responsive echo in the citizens of Tarragona and the breast of the brave Reding, who resolved at all hazards to make an attempt for its relief. The plan which he adopted was ably conceived, and failed only from the indifferent quality of the troops to whose execution it was intrusted. Fifteen thousand men under Castro, who lay outside of Tarragona, were to move forward so as to interpose between St-Cyr and Barcelona; Reding with ten thousand more, issuing from the town, was to assail the front; while the Somanes, from all quarters, were summoned to descend from their hills to co-operate in the grand attack, from which the total destruction of the enemy was confidently and universally anticipated.¹

¹ Tor. ii.
301, 302.
Nap. ii. 84,
85. St-Cyr,
94, 102.
Cabanes, p.
3, c. 14.

To withstand this formidable concentration of forces, St-Cyr had nominally forty-eight thousand men at his

disposal, but of these only twenty-three thousand were concentrated under his immediate command at Villa Franca in the Llobregat, the remainder being either detached to keep up the communications, or sick and wounded in the rear. But such a body, under such a chief, had little to apprehend from the ill-combined efforts of forty thousand Spaniards, in part irregular, and dispersed over a line of fifteen leagues in extent. The moment that St-Cyr saw the enemy's forces accumulating round him, he took the judicious resolution to act vigorously on the offensive, and break the enemy's centre before their wings could come up to its relief. With this view, he broke up from Villa Franca with the division of Pino, and joining his generals of division, Chabran and Chabot, formed a force in all eleven thousand strong. Early on the morning of the 17th, he commenced a vigorous attack on Castro's troops at Igualada, who, being completely surprised, were speedily put to the rout; and having thus broken through the enemy's line, he left part of his force at that place, and advanced against Reding, who was issuing from Tarragona with ten thousand men. Though assailed by superior forces, the brave soul of Reding retreated with reluctance; but he felt the necessity of doing so, and with great difficulty he contrived to collect the greater part of his army, about twelve thousand men, with which he slowly moved, hardly shunning a combat, towards Tarragona. On the following morning, however, he encountered St-Cyr with fifteen thousand men at Valls, and after a short combat was totally routed. Two thousand men were killed or wounded, the whole artillery taken, and Reding, who fought heroically to the very last, so severely wounded, that he had great difficulty in regaining Tarragona, where he soon after died. The loss of the French did not exceed a thousand men. Such was the popular ferment against Reding, when he arrived at that town, that he with difficulty escaped destruction from the populace,¹ though

CHAP.
LXI.

1809.
62.

Defeat of
the Span-
iards at
Igualada.

Feb. 16.

Feb. 17.

Feb. 24.

¹ Tor. ii.
302, 307.
Cabanes,
c. 14, 15.
St-Cyr, 112,
126. Nap.
ii. 83, 91.

CHAP.
LXI.

1809.
63.
Languid
operations
in Catalo-
nia after
this success,
and retreat
of St-Cyr to
the north of
the pro-
vince.
Feb. 27.

he had discharged his duty better than any man in his army.

After this decisive victory, the regular war in Catalonia was at an end ; and such was the general consternation which it produced, joined to the fall of Saragossa, of which intelligence was received at the same time, that, if St-Cyr had pushed on immediately to Tortosa, it too would have fallen into his hands, almost without resistance. As it was, he made himself master of Reuss, an important commercial city, second only in size and importance to Barcelona, and containing ample resources of every kind. There were taken, also, several thousand sick and wounded, whom St-Cyr, with generous, though perhaps not altogether disinterested humanity, as he might hope thereby to transplant the seeds of pestilence into the place, sent into Tarragona to Reding ; a step which led to a convention, by which it was agreed that the wounded on either side should not be regarded as prisoners, but allowed to remain where they were, and rejoin their respective armies upon their recovery—an admirable arrangement, which it is devoutly to be wished could be extended to all civilised warfare. Want of provisions, however, compelled the French general to leave the neighbourhood of Tarragona, of which he was not yet in a condition to undertake the siege ; and, approaching the French frontier, he drew near to Vich, in order to make preparations for the siege of Gerona, which he meditated.¹

March 19.
1 Tor. ii.
207, 209.
St-Cyr,
127, 140.
Cabanes,
c. 16.

64.
Unsuccess-
ful attempt
on Barce-
lona.
March 10.

Upon his retreat, the Somatenes, who had never ceased to maintain themselves in the mountains, even after the disaster of Valls, issued in all directions from their retreats, and, increasing in audacity with a few partisan successes, not only regained possession of the whole open country to the south of Barcelona, but pushed parties up to the walls of that fortress. The object of this movement was to lend a hand to a strong party within the town, who were conspiring to gain possession of some of

the gates, and deliver them to the patriots ; and the English squadron, under Lord Collingwood, at the same time approached to co-operate in the enterprise, and cannonaded the works towards the sea. The enterprise failed, however, from the accidental defeat of a body of the Somatenes, who were advancing towards the walls. But such was the alarm inspired by this attempt, that Duhesme took the resolution of compelling all the principal Spanish functionaries to take the oath of allegiance to King Joseph ; and upon their courageous refusal, twenty-nine of the principal citizens were forthwith sent prisoners to Monjuish, from which they were soon after despatched by St-Cyr into France. This severity, however, so foreign to the usual character of that officer, failed in producing any effect. On the contrary, the fortitude of these intrepid magistrates, in enduring captivity rather than abandon their sovereign and oath, spread the flame afresh over the country. Tarragona, Lerida, and Tortosa, recovered from their consternation, and took separate measures for their defence ; and the guerillas multiplied to such a degree in the mountains, that the French army was soon master of no ground but what itself occupied within the walls of Barcelona, or at Vich, deserted of its inhabitants on their approach.¹

CHAP.
LXI.

1809.

April 10.

¹ Tor. ii.
307, 312.
St-Cyr, 127,
159. Nap.
ii. 93. 98.
Cabanès,
p. 3, c. 16.

To such a degree were the spirits of the rural population, especially in the mountainous districts, elevated by the retreat of St-Cyr from the neighbourhood of Tarragona to the foot of the Pyreñees, that Blake, who, on the death of Reding, was appointed captain-general of the three provinces of Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia, deemed the opportunity favourable for making a forward movement, to recover his lost ground in the first of these provinces. With this view, he advanced from the mountain region around Lerida, towards the plain of Aragon ; and having arrived on the banks of the Cinca, a mountain torrent which descends from the mountains on the

65.
Renewal of
the contest
by Blake in
Aragon.
May 16.

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LXI.

1809.

Catalonian frontier to the Ebro, he found eight companies of chosen infantry separated from the remainder of the brigade to which they belonged, and succeeded in making the whole prisoners. This success elevated the hopes of the peasantry in the highest degree, and encouraged Blake to attempt the recapture of Saragossa and the entire expulsion of the French from the province. He was confirmed in the hope that this was practicable by the great reduction of their troops on the Ebro; Bessières' corps having been moved to Valladolid and Old Castile in the beginning of April, to keep up the communications on the great road from Bayonne; and Junot's alone remaining to make head against the Aragonese round Saragossa. Such had been the ravages which the sword of the enemy and the pestilence consequent on the siege had made in the ranks of this corps, that at this time, instead of twenty-four thousand, who crowded round its standards at the commencement of the siege, it could not muster more than ten thousand combatants; and they were in such a state of depression from the privations and dangers to which they had been exposed, that little reliance could be placed on them in presence of an enterprising enemy.¹

¹ Suchet's
Mem. i. 10,
12. Tor. iii.
15, 16. Nap.
ii. 97, 98.

66.
Suchet takes
the com-
mand in
Aragon:
his early
history.

Junot, who had been taken ill at this juncture, and had never recovered in the Emperor's estimation his defeat by the English in Portugal, was superseded by SUCHET, a young general of division, hitherto unknown in high command, but whose great exploits and almost unbroken success threw a radiance round the declining years of the empire. Louis Gabriel Suchet was born at Lyons, on the 2d March 1772. His father was a silk manufacturer, who had acquired considerable notice by his discoveries in his profession, and his services in several municipal situations. Young Suchet, in the first instance, received the elements of education at the College of Isle Barbe; and in 1792, at the age of twenty, entered a corps of Lyonese volunteer cavalry. Soon he was

appointed captain, and, after a short interval, chief of battalion in the regiment of Ardeche, with which he took part in the siege of Toulon, and had the good fortune to make prisoner General O'Hara, the English governor of the fortress. After the reduction of that place, he was attached to the army of Italy, and took part in most of the actions of the campaigns of 1794 and 1795, in the Maritime Alps. In the battle of Loano, his regiment captured successively three Austrian standards. Under Napoleon, in the Italian campaign of 1796, he was engaged in the principal combats which took place, especially those at Lodi, Rivoli, Arcola, and Castiglione.¹

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¹ Suchet,
Mem. i. 1,
250. Biog.
des Con-
temporains,
187, 189.

He was equally distinguished in the campaign of 1797; and, for his brilliant services at the combat in the gorge of Neumarkt in Styria, was named by Napoleon general of brigade on the field of battle. In 1798, he conducted himself with such ability in the invasion of Switzerland, that he was intrusted with conveying the standards taken from the enemy to Paris; and retained in Helvetia under Brune, instead of being sent into honourable banishment with Napoleon in Egypt. He was afterwards warmly engaged in the campaign of the Alps in 1799; commanded a division under Joubert and Moreau at the battle of Novi; powerfully contributed, by his great abilities, to stem the torrent of disaster which there overwhelmed the French arms; and finally brought the Austrians to a stand on the banks of the Var. After Napoleon's passage of the St Bernard, he pressed with vigour on the retiring Austrians, and took from them above seven thousand prisoners. His division formed part of Lannes' corps in the campaign of Ulm and Austerlitz; and was equally distinguished in that of Jena and Friedland the year following; so that, when the Spanish war broke out, he was already marked out by Napoleon for separate command and great achievement.²

67.
His progress
as a general
of division.

² Biog. des
Cont. i. 89,
91. Suchet's
Mem. i.
250, 430.

Though not of the school of those illustrious chiefs,

CHAP.
LXI.

1809.
68.

His charac-
ter.

¹ O'Meara,
i. 492. *Las*
Cases, ii. 11.

who, raised to greatness during the struggles of the Republic, afterwards sustained with such lustre the fortunes of the empire, he was distinguished by a capacity which rendered him better qualified than any one of them to attain the summit of military glory. Unlike Murat, Ney, and many other leaders, whose brilliant actions were performed chiefly, if not entirely, when executing the orders of the Emperor, and when surrounded by the halo of his fame, he early showed remarkable ability in separate command, and evinced those resources in difficulty, and that resolution in adversity, which, more than the splendour of success, are the tests of real military greatness. He has been characterised by Napoleon as "the first of his generals ; as having grown in capacity, in later times, in a manner which was altogether surprising :"¹ and after making every allowance for the feelings which must have been roused in the Emperor's mind, by the manner in which he was deserted by many of his other marshals in the period of his adversity, enough remains durably engraved on the tablets of history to prove that Suchet was not undeserving of this eulogium. Nor were his civil qualities less remarkable than his military. The order and regularity which he introduced into the provinces which his arms had subdued, were justly regarded as in the highest degree admirable ; and while they completely relieved the imperial treasury of all the expense of his armaments, they secured for him the gratitude and affection of the inhabitants subject to his rule, even at the very time that he was inflicting the deepest wounds on the fortunes of their country.

69.
Defeat of
the French
at Alcaniz.

The first essay in arms in Spain, however, of this celebrated chief, was unfortunate ; and so unpromising was the aspect of affairs, shortly after he entered on the command in Aragon, that nothing but the greatest courage and capacity could have saved the French cause in the province from total ruin. Collecting all the disposable forces

which he could muster, to avenge the affront received on the banks of the Cinca, and stop the progress of the enemy in that quarter, Suchet issued from Saragossa, and soon came up with the enemy, who had made themselves masters of Alcaniz, which they occupied with twelve thousand men. The French general had eight thousand infantry, and seven hundred horse ; but the superior discipline of his troops gave him hopes of an easy victory. The action began by an attack by the French on the Mount of Las Horcas, in the centre of the Spanish line, which was assailed by three thousand of their best men ; but the assault was repulsed without much difficulty by Blake's infantry and artillery, and Suchet, apprehensive of still greater disasters with troops so seriously discouraged, drew off, after a short combat. Such, however, was the disorder which prevailed, that though they were not pursued, a panic, originating in a false report spread by a drummer in the night, threw the whole army into confusion, and they fled pell-mell into Samper, as if utterly routed. In this disgraceful affair, the French lost nearly a thousand men, the Spaniards not three hundred ; and such was the dejected state of the troops, that Suchet was compelled to fall back to Saragossa, where it required all his moral courage to withstand the general clamour for a total evacuation of Aragon.¹

CHAP.
LXI.

1809.

May 23.

¹ Suchet, i,
16, 21. Tor.
iii. 17, 18.
Nap. ii. 99,
100.

Had the Spanish general been at the head of well-disciplined troops, who could be relied on for operations in the level country, he might, by Suchet's admission, have accomplished the entire expulsion of the French from Aragon ; but the event proved that Blake judged wisely in not compromising his army, which had still very little of the consistency of regular soldiers, and was almost destitute of cavalry, in the level plains of the Ebro. For a fortnight after the battle he did nothing but march his troops from one position to another, sedulously endeavouring, during that period, to instruct them in the rudiments of the military art : and at length he deemed them suffi-

70.
Approach
of Blake to
Saragossa.

CHAP.
LXI.

1809.

June 16.

¹ Suchet, i.
20. 30. Tor.
iii. 20, 21.
South. ii.
505, 506.

71.
Indecisive
action at
Maria, close
to Saragossa.

ciently improved to hazard a conflict in the flat country. Suchet, meanwhile, expecting a siege, had been strengthening the Monte Torrero and suburbs of Saragossa, on the southern bank of the Ebro, and strenuously endeavouring to restore the spirit of his soldiers ; but the event did not put the strength of his fortifications to the test. In the middle of June, Blake, at the head of seventeen thousand men, approached Saragossa, and the French general marched out with ten thousand men and twelve guns to meet him. The battle was fought under the walls of the capital : Aragon was the prize of the victor ; but the enthusiasm of the Spaniards, in such a situation, was no match for the discipline and now restored spirit of the French. Blake had imprudently detached five thousand of his best troops, under Areizaga, to Botorrita, with the design, at that time so common with the Spaniards, of surrounding the enemy ; so that, for the shock of battle, he had only twelve thousand men to rely on, and they were decidedly inferior, not merely in the steadiness of the foot-soldiers, but in the number and quality of the cavalry.¹

He began the action by extending his left, with the design of outflanking his opponent ; but this movement was quickly checked by a rude charge of Polish lancers, on the flank of the advancing wing, which threw it back in disorder on the second line. Suchet took advantage of this success to move forward his whole centre and right against the enemy, at the same time refusing his left. A precipitous ravine separated the two armies along this part of the line ; the French infantry plunged into the hollow, and, rapidly scaling the opposite heights, boldly advanced against the enemy. They were received, however, with so violent a fire of grape and musketry as drove them back into the shelter of the ravine. Suchet immediately reinforced the attacking troops by two battalions of Polish infantry, who again led on the charge. A violent storm at this instant arose, and concealed the

two armies from each other, though separated only by a very short distance; but during this obscurity the French general was preparing his decisive movement, and no sooner had it cleared away than he made a rapid charge, with two regiments of horse, on the Spanish right, overthrew their cavalry, which were stationed there, and got possession of a bridge in the rear, by which the retreat of the army could alone be effected. The victorious horse now turned fiercely, supported by the infantry of the left, which quickly came up, on the Spanish centre, which nevertheless resisted bravely, and, by the aid of its numerous artillery, for long made good its ground against the combined attacks of the French centre and right. At length, however, some regiments stationed there, pressed at once in front and flank, having given way, the general ordered the whole to retire; and the retreat by the bridge, the only one practicable for the guns, being cut off, they were all taken to the number of twenty. Favoured by the broken ground, however, almost all the troops withdrew in safety, and were rallied at night by Blake, at Botorrita, and reunited to Areizaga, from whom, in an evil hour, they had been separated. The French lost about eight hundred, the Spaniards a thousand, men in this battle; but it decided the fate of Aragon for the remainder of the campaign, and by its results restored the French superiority on both banks of the Ebro.¹

¹ Suchet, ii. 28, 32. Tor. iii. 22, 23. Soult, ii. 306, 307.

It quickly appeared how completely the spirit of the French army had been raised, and that of the Spanish depressed, by this reverse. Next day Blake, reinforced by Areizaga's troops, was much stronger than when he had first fought, while the French were nearly a thousand weaker; and the artillery of the fresh division almost compensated that which had been lost on the preceding day. Nevertheless, Blake withdrew with these troops, still fourteen thousand strong, to Belchite; and Suchet, having by great exertions collected twelve thousand men,

72.
Disgraceful
rout of the
Spaniards at
Belchite.

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LXI.

1809.

followed and attacked them. The Spanish army was skilfully posted in a strong position among the sloping banks and olive groves which surround that town ; Blake harangued his men before the enemy came up, and they promised a vigorous resistance. Nevertheless, hardly had the fire commenced when, a French shell having fallen on a Spanish ammunition-waggon and blown it up, the nearest battalion disbanded and fled : the next immediately followed the example ; the contagion ran like wildfire along the whole line, and soon Blake was left alone with his staff and a few officers. Such was the rapidity of their flight that few prisoners were taken, and fewer still were killed or wounded ; but the whole remaining guns, ten in number, with all the caissons, fell into the enemy's hands, and the Spanish army was entirely dispersed. A few broken bands reached Lerida and Mequinenza in Catalonia, but the greater part returned to their homes, and the elements of all regular resistance were extinguished in Aragon for the remainder of the war.¹

¹ Tor. iii. 24,
25. Suchet,
i. 34, 36.
South. ii.
508, 510.

73.
St-Cyr's
preparations
for the siege
of Gerona.

St-Cyr, meanwhile, was actively preparing for the siege of Gerona. The design of the Emperor was, that Verdier should be intrusted with the direction of the siege, and St-Cyr with that of the covering army ; but the former of these generals, who had failed at Saragossa, and was most anxious to retrieve his character by a signal victory in the present instance, was unwilling to begin till assured of success, and urgent that his attacking force, which did not at first exceed ten thousand men, should be reinforced by a division of the general-in-chief's army. This proposal St-Cyr at first refused, from a just sense of the risk to which such a small body as would remain to him would be exposed, in the midst of so vast a host of enemies as was in arms in Catalonia. Thereupon ensued an angry correspondence between the two generals, which terminated in Verdier appealing directly to Napoleon, who ordered St-Cyr to place three thousand infantry,

five hundred horse, and a corps of artillery and sappers, at his disposal—a dislocation of force which reduced the covering army to fifteen thousand men, and raised the besieging one to the same amount.* These reinforcements having left Verdier without excuse for any longer delay, he resolved forthwith to commence the siege, and the investment was completed by the Spanish outposts being all driven in on the 1st June. But this disagreement between the two generals produced a coldness which essentially injured their mutual co-operation, and protracted, beyond what might otherwise have ensued, the duration of the siege.¹

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LXI.

1809.

¹ St-Cyr, 157, 162.
Belm. ii. 494, 498.
Nap. iii. 19.

An untoward event occurred at this time, even on the element on which Great Britain had hitherto been victorious, which had a most calamitous effect on the war in Catalonia. Notwithstanding the extreme vigilance and admirable arrangements of Lord Collingwood, Admiral Cosmao, with a valuable convoy, succeeded in eluding the English blockading squadron, and escaping from Toulon, from whence he made straight for Barcelona, into which he threw his supplies, and got back without sustaining any serious injury. The garrison of that important fortress, from being in a state of extreme want, especially of stores and ammunition, were, by this seasonable reinforcement, put in a state of such affluence, that they were not merely in a condition to sustain a long siege, but could spare ample supplies of stores of all kinds to the besieging force

74.
Unfortunate supply of Barcelona with stores by sea.

May 7.

* The exact force employed by the besiegers in this memorable siege, and the covering army, was as follows :—

Forces employed in the siege, viz.

Infantry and cavalry,	.	.	.	.	14,456
Artillery,	.	.	.	.	1,362
Do. 7th corps,	.	.	.	.	961
Engineers,	.	.	.	.	314
Total in the siege,	.	.	.	.	17,093
Army of observation, cavalry and infantry,	.	.	.	.	15,732
Total,					32,825

—BELMAS, *Journaux des Sièges dans la Péninsule*, ii. 650-655.

CHAP.
LXI.

1809.

¹ St-Cyr,
159, 160.
Tor. iii. 78.

at Gerona. The convoy which conveyed them, arrived safe there under the protection of six of St Cyr's battalions, detached for that purpose from the covering force; and by relieving the general-in-chief of all anxiety in regard to Barcelona, enabled him to give his undivided attention to the important duty with which he was more immediately connected.¹

75.
Prepara-
tions of the
besieged for
their de-
fence.

Atlas,
Plate 60.

"Whoever speaks of a capitulation or surrender, shall be instantly put to death." Such were the words of an order of the day, on the 5th May, with which Alvarez, governor of Gerona, announced his resolution to hold out to the last extremity. Nor did the spirit of the garrison and inhabitants fall short of these heroic sentiments. Animated by the recollection of their former glorious resistance, the citizens had taken the most energetic steps to second the efforts of the regular soldiers; and had formed a corps, composed of the whole male population, without distinction of rank or age, whose duty was to support, by every possible means, the defence of the garrison. There, too, as at Saragossa, the women, even of rank and station, were formed into companies to bear away and tend the wounded; and, at every breath of air, their ribbons were seen to float amidst the bayonets of the soldiers. The patron saint of the town, St Narcissus, was declared generalissimo of the armies, and the utmost efforts were made to elevate the courage of the besieged, by the belief that his celestial aid would extend the same protection to the town which he had already shown in the former siege, and as had been displayed five hundred years before, when Philip the Bold, who besieged the place, had, according to the old chronicles, had his army destroyed by a miraculous cloud of locusts. Nor were more worldly means of defence neglected: the regular garrison of three thousand men was animated with the best spirit; the ramparts were plentifully lined with artillery, and provisions for a siege of many months' duration already provided.²

² Tor. iii. 77.
Belm. ii.
497, 498.
St-Cyr, 181.

The fortress stands on a steep declivity, rising up from the right bank of the Ter, which terminates in a bluff precipice, on which are situated several forts which constitute the real strength of the place. The upper town is only defended by a single wall, fifteen feet high; the lower, which is more exposed, has the protection of a rampart, wet ditch, and outworks. The crest of the hill is occupied by three forts, called the Capucins; and on the north, the town is commanded by a fort called Monjuich, standing on a rocky eminence, and separated from it by the valley of Galligan. This fort, which had the advantage of bomb-proof casemates, cisterns, and magazines, was tolerably fortified, and was garrisoned by nine hundred brave men, resolved to defend themselves to the last extremity; while the rocky nature of the ground round both it and the forts of the Capucins, rendered the formation of approaches a matter of great labour and difficulty.¹

The first serious attack of the enemy was directed against Monjuich, and the towers which formed its outworks were carried by assault on the 19th June. About the same time, a convoy of a thousand cattle, destined for the garrison, fell into the hands of the French; and the near approach of St-Cyr with his covering force, raised the troops which might be employed in the siege to thirty thousand men. After this, the breaching batteries continued to thunder incessantly on the walls of the fort for a fortnight; and a large breach having been at length effected, an assault was attempted early in July, which was repulsed with severe loss. Three days afterwards, and when the breach had been enlarged, and the adjoining defences ruined by the incessant fire of sixty pieces of cannon, the attack was again renewed with a very large force; but although the French, in close column, twice returned to the assault with great courage, they were on both occasions repulsed. The Spaniards had so barricaded the summit of the breach, that it was impossible to sur-

CHAP.
LXI.

1809.
76.
Description
of Gerona.
—
Atlas,
Plate 60.

¹ Belm. ii.
497, 501.
Nap. ii. 23,
24. Tor. iii.
77, 78. St-
Cyr, 181,
182.

77.
Progress of
the siege.
June 19.

July 4.
July 8.

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LXI.

1809.

¹ Tor. iii. 82,
84. Belmas,
ii. 501, 536.
Jones, i.
257. Nap.
ii. 25, 26.
St-Cyr, 190,
194.

mount the obstacles, and the flanking fire of a half-moon and ravelin on either side tore the assailants in pieces, and finally drove them back with the loss of a thousand killed and wounded. Taught, by this bloody repulse, the quality of the enemy with whom he had to deal, St-Cyr now confined himself to the surer operations of sap and mine, and a month was consumed in that subterraneous warfare, without any material progress being made in the reduction of the place.¹

78.
Fall of
Monjuich.
Aug. 12.

Meanwhile the French general carried by storm Palamos, a small town built on a rocky promontory running into the sea, a day's march from Gerona, from which the besieged had occasionally derived supplies. The detachment necessary for this enterprise and the accumulation of force around Gerona, having reduced the covering army on the side of Hostalrich and Barcelona to eight thousand men, the Spanish generals, notwithstanding their numerous defeats, were tempted to try the relief of the place. While the preparations for this purpose were going on under the direction of Blake, the mining operations and fire of the besiegers against Monjuich continued with such violence, that its buildings and defences were entirely ruined; and the fort, being no longer tenable, was evacuated in the middle of August, and the garrison withdrawn into the town. The defence of this external post was of sinister augury for the ultimate issue of their undertaking to the besiegers; for though garrisoned only by nine hundred men, it had withstood thirty-seven days of open trenches, two assaults, had sustained the discharge of twenty-three thousand cannon-shot, and two thousand bombs, and had cost the assailants three thousand men.² Hardly one of the garrison was unhurt;* five hundred

² Nap. ii.
33, 35. Tor.
iii. 85, 88.
Belm. ii.
541, 566.

* "A drummer had been placed near the breach to beat the alarm when a shell was approaching. As he was doing so, a cannon-shot carried off part of his thigh, and lacerated his knee in a dreadful manner. When the attendants, however, approached to convey him to the hospital, he said, 'No! though wounded in the leg, I have still arms left to beat the drum, and warn my friends of the approach of bombs.'—TORENO, 384.

had been killed or seriously wounded. Elated with this success, however, Verdier boasted in his public despatches that Gerona could not now hold out fifteen days : but in making this assertion, he underrated both the resolution of the besieged and the resources of the Spaniards for the relief of the place.

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1809.

Although the lower town was commanded in many parts by the fire from Monjuich and the forts of the Capucins, and its defences on that side consisted only of an old weak wall ; yet the governor and inhabitants continued to make the most resolute defence, and every inch of ground which the besiegers gained, was won only by hard fighting and profuse bloodshed. Meanwhile, Blake having made his arrangements for the relief of the town, the attempt was made, and with perfect success, on the 1st of September. Claros and Rovira, two Somatene chiefs, had previously excited great alarm on the French frontier, by their attack on a convoy coming up to the relief of Figueras, which was constantly blockaded by the Miquelets ; and Blake, having concerted measures with them, drew near with nine thousand men from the side of Hostalrich ; while four thousand infantry and five hundred cavalry, under General Conde, with a convoy of two thousand beasts of burden, each laden with flour, unknown to the enemy, approached from the same direction, and Claros and Rovira threatened the besiegers' posts on the north, from the side of Figueras. With such skill were these operations conducted, that the enemy found himself assailed in every quarter except that by which the convoy was to enter ; and St Cyr, conceiving that the raising of the siege, not the revictualing of the town, was intended, drew off his troops to the points menaced, so completely that the convoy entered safe, amidst the transports of the inhabitants, with hardly any fighting.¹ After this success, Conde, having left three thousand of his men to reinforce the garrison, withdrew in safety with the remainder to Hostalrich,

79.
Efforts of the
Spaniards
for the re-
lief of
Gerona,
which are
successful.
Sept. 1.

¹ Tor. iii. 91,
92. Nap. ii.
36, 38. Belm.
ii. 568, 588.
St-Cyr, 210,
226.

CHAP.
LXI.

1809.

80.

Heroic con-
stancy of the
besieged.
Sept. 11.

whither Blake soon after retired with the bulk of his forces.

To have relieved the besieged in presence of fifteen thousand disposable French troops, headed by such a general as St-Cyr, with soldiers discouraged by repeated defeats, was no small subject of congratulation to the Spaniards, and reflected great credit on the combinations and skill of Blake. But it speedily appeared that the supplies thus received, without having given them the means of permanent deliverance, had only prolonged for an additional period the duration of their sufferings. The supply of provisions introduced, taking into view the number of extra mouths brought along with them, did not exceed a fortnight's consumption ; and the spirits of the besieged, which had been elevated to an extraordinary degree by the first appearance of succour, and anticipated from it a total deliverance, were proportionally depressed when they beheld the friendly standards on all sides recede from view, and the French, without being disturbed, resume their menacing positions round the city. The fire of the breaching batteries was recommenced on the 11th September with redoubled fury ; a sortie to destroy the most advanced works of the besiegers, though attended at first with some success, was finally repulsed with loss ; and three enormous breaches having been made in the walls, a general assault was made a few days after, and led to a struggle supported on both sides with unparalleled resolution.¹

¹ Belm. ii.
596, 600.
Tor. ii. 93,
94. St-Cyr,
226, 252.

81.
Repulse of
the grand
assault.
Sept. 19.

Alvarez had skilfully prepared all the means, not only of defence, but of succouring the wounded, bringing up supplies to the points of danger, and relieving with fresh troops the defenders of the breaches ; but, able as were his previous dispositions, and heroically as he discharged, on that eventful crisis, all the duties of a commander and common soldier, the town must have sunk under the fury of the assault, if his efforts had not been seconded by the whole population. At the sound of the drums, which

beat in all the streets, and the mournful clang of the tocsin which rang in the churches, the whole inhabitants poured forth. Men and women, monks and children, hasted with perfect regularity, without either trepidation or confusion, to the posts assigned them; and, amidst the fire of two hundred pieces of artillery, calmly awaited death in the service of their country. Never was a more sublime spectacle beheld in modern times. Silently they took up their stations; neither shouts nor cries were heard, but the bright expression of every eye revealed the sacred ardour by which the whole were animated. At half-past four in the afternoon, three massy columns advanced to the breaches, while a terrific fire of artillery swept the ramparts by which they were flanked, now almost entirely denuded of their parapets. Three times did the assailants, with heroic courage, mount to the summit of the breaches, and three times were they repulsed by the invincible firmness of the garrison. Such was the fury with which the defenders were animated, that often, finding the discharge of firearms too slow a method of defence, they threw down their muskets, and lifting up great stones with both hands, hurled them down upon the enemy. At length, after a hard struggle of three hours' duration, the assailants drew off, leaving the breaches covered with their slain, and weakened by the fall of sixteen hundred men.¹

¹ St-Cyr, 252, 254.
Nap. ii. 45.
Tor. iii. 94, 96. Belm. ii. 600, 610.

The dreadful loss sustained in these bloody assaults, and the undaunted countenance of the garrison, induced St-Cyr after this to convert the siege into a blockade, and trust for the final reduction of the place to the certain effect of famine, and the continued fire of artillery, which would ruin every habitation which it contained. With this view, the lines round the town were drawn still closer than before, and every effort was made to exclude the casual introduction of small bodies of troops, which had occasionally taken place, notwithstanding all the vigilance of the besiegers, since the commencement of

82.
Extreme distress of the besieged from want of provisions.

CHAP.
LXI.

1809.

Sept. 26.

¹ Tor. iii. 97,
98. St-Cyr,
254, 263.
Belm. ii.
611.

83.
Recall of
St-Cyr, and
distress of
the place.
Oct. 18.

the siege. Blake, on the other hand, being sensible that the garrison was reduced to great straits from want of provisions, assembled fourteen thousand men, and made a second attempt for its relief. Meanwhile, the besiegers were suffering almost as much from want of provisions as the besieged; the Somatenes on all the neighbouring hills rendering the supply of the army extremely hazardous, and the vigilance of Lord Collingwood having intercepted and destroyed a large squadron which sailed from Toulon for their relief. But the failure of Blake's attempt to throw any effectual supplies into the place, relieved the one party as much as it depressed the other. St-Cyr, more on his guard on this occasion, interposed with the bulk of his covering force between the besiegers' lines and the quarter from which the convoy was approaching. The result was that the whole, consisting of two thousand beasts of burden, with the exception of a hundred and seventy which penetrated with O'Donnell at the head of a thousand men into the town, fell into the enemy's hands, while Blake was driven off with the loss of three thousand of his best troops. This was a fatal blow to Gerona: plenty, thereafter, reigned in the one camp, as much as want raged in the beleaguered fortress. Secure within his impregnable lines, St-Cyr, as he has himself told us, waited quietly till time, fever, and famine should subdue the resistance of the enemy.¹

He was not permitted, however, himself to reap the fruit of this prudent but inglorious policy. The slow progress of the siege, and the repulses of the assaults, were little suited to the impatient mind of Napoleon, who recalled St-Cyr, and sent Marshal Augereau to assume the command. On the same day on which he arrived, O'Donnell, with his brave band, fearful of augmenting the distress of the besieged by additional mouths, again made his way out of the place, and reached Blake's quarters in safety. But the failure of provisions and supplies of all sorts was now daily

making it more apparent that the fall of this heroic town could not much longer be averted. The hospitals were crowded with sick and wounded ; beds, attendants, and medicines, were wanting ; a malignant fever, as at Saragossa, had broken out, and was daily carrying off great numbers, both of the soldiers and citizens ; the magazines of corn and flour were almost exhausted, and the inhabitants were seeking the miserable resource of inferior animals. The capture of a third great convoy collected at Hostalrich for the relief of the place, and the defeat of O'Donnell's force, which formed its escort, both deprived the besieged of present relief, and supplied the besiegers in plenty with all sorts of provisions ; while the transference of a large portion of Junot's corps from Aragon to the beleaguering force, and the arrival of powerful reinforcements from France, cut off all hopes of ultimate deliverance.¹

CHAP.
LXI.

1809.

¹ Belm. ii.
612, 630.
St-Cyr, 270,
272. Tor.
iii. 99, 104.

Still the heroic governor, and his worthy companions in arms, continued their resistance for two months longer, with hopeless but unsubdued resolution. All offers of capitulation were sternly rejected ; and it was not till provisions of every sort were entirely exhausted, and the remaining inhabitants, almost dying of famine, and having consumed every vestige of food in the city, had been reduced to the deplorable and unparalleled necessity of feeding on their own hair, that the word capitulation was for the first time pronounced in the city. Even in that woful extremity, and when seven large breaches were guarded by detachments of soldiers hardly able to bear the weight of their own arms, and more resembling ghosts than living men, Augereau did not venture to attempt an assault. But Alvarez, whom no necessity, however cruel, could induce to think of a surrender, was seized, like Palafox, with the prevailing fever, and soon reduced to the last extremity ; and his successor, Bolivar, felt the necessity of entering into negotiations for the surrender of the place. Augereau, too happy to gain possession of it on

84.
Capitulation of the town, and its fearful state.

CHAP.
LXI.

1809.
Dec. 12.

any conditions, willingly granted honourable terms to the besieged ; and, on the 12th December, Gerona opened its gates to the conqueror. When the French marched in, they gazed with amazement on the proofs which were everywhere presented of the devoted courage of the garrison and inhabitants. The town was little better than a heap of ruins ; the streets, unpaved, and intersected in all quarters by barricades, were lined by half-destroyed edifices ; unburied bodies lying about in all directions, putrid pools yet stained with blood, spread a pestilential air around ; the survivors of the inhabitants, pale and emaciated, resembled spectres haunting a city of the dead. Almost all the heads of families had fallen ; the women with child had, almost without exception, perished ; numbers of infants at the breast had starved from want of nourishment. Nine thousand persons had died during the siege within its walls in the service of their country, of whom four thousand were citizens, being nearly a third part of their whole number.¹

¹ Tor. iii.
99, 104. St.
Cyr, 270.
274. Belm.
ii. 612, 642.
Nap. ii. 46,
49.

85.
Extraordi-
nary nature
of its de-
fence.

Carnot has observed that the siege even of the greatest fortresses in modern times has seldom been prolonged beyond six weeks ; and yet Gerona, with its feeble ramparts, held out seven months, of which six and a half were of open trenches. The besiegers directed against the place the fire of forty batteries, armed by above a hundred and eighty pieces of artillery, from which were thrown into the town eighty thousand cannon-balls and twenty thousand bombs. The greater part of the guns of the besiegers were rendered useless by constant discharges, or dismounted by the fire of the town : fifteen thousand men had perished by the sword or disease around its walls. Four thousand three hundred men were made prisoners in the town, including its heroic governor, Alvarez, then in the last stage of fever. With brutal harshness, Augereau, without regard to his noble defence or lamentable condition, had him shut up alone in a dungeon of Figueras, where he soon after died, under circumstances which

made the Spaniards suspect assassination; although his state of debility probably rendered that last act of atrocity unnecessary. But, as Colonel Napier, with the true spirit of a soldier, observes, "As long as virtue and courage are esteemed in the world, his name will be held in veneration; and if Augereau forgot what was due to this gallant Spaniard's merit, posterity will not forget to do justice to both."¹

CHAP.
LXI.

1809.

¹Nap. ii. 50.
Tor. iii. 103,
104. Belm.
ii. 645, 648.

The fall of Gerona terminated the year's campaign in Aragon and Catalonia. The Cortes, assembled at Seville, in just commemoration of the unparalleled constancy displayed by the besieged both in that town and Saragossa, passed decrees awarding extraordinary honours to the inhabitants and garrisons of both, and to the illustrious chiefs, Palafox and Alvarez, by whom their defence had been conducted; and after the peace, Castanos, then governor-general of Catalonia, repaired to Figueras, and constructed an appropriate monument to the latter of these heroes in the fortress where he had expired. But these successes gave the enemy a firm footing both in Aragon and Catalonia; and the resistance in these provinces was now reduced to a desultory guerilla warfare in the mountains, and the siege of the remaining strongholds in the latter province, still in the hands of the Spaniards. The whole fortresses of Aragon had fallen into the hands of the enemy: and although Tarragona, Lerida, Tortosa, and the other fortified cities of Catalonia, were still in the possession of the patriots, yet it soon became painfully apparent that their means of regular resistance in the field were exhausted. Shortly after the fall of Gerona, Augereau, having sent all the monks of the town off as prisoners of war into France, marched against the irregular mass in front of Hostalrich, which had so long disquieted the operations of the besiegers. Two brigades sufficed to defeat six thousand of them, on the ridge of la Jonquieris: Souham dispersed the bands of Rovera and Claros at Olot and Campredon, and got possession of

86.
Termination of the campaign in Catalonia, and aspect of affairs at that period in that quarter.

Dec. 18.

CHAP.
LXI.

1809.
Dec. 25.
Dec. 26.

Dec. 28.

Ripoll, their principal manufactory of arms. At the same time, Pino, with his Italian division, routed a corps of four thousand mountaineers; while Augereau himself, having, by these successes, re-established his communication with France, marched against the principal Spanish army, under Blake, whom he worsted at the Coll-de-Sespina, and drove towards Tarragona; which enabled him to draw his forces around Hostalrich, and commence the blockade of that fortress. Suchet, at the same time, was making preparations for the sieges of Tarragona and Lerida; so that everything announced vigorous and decisive operations in that quarter of the Peninsula early in the ensuing year.¹

¹ Belm. ii.
643, 649.
South. iv.

CHAPTER LXII.

CAMPAIGN OF THE DOURO AND TALAVERA.

WHILE Aragon and Catalonia were the theatre of these memorable events, Soult and Ney, in Galicia, were slowly reaping the fruit of their successful operations, which had terminated in the expulsion of the English from the north of Spain. Both parties for a time appeared exhausted: the Spaniards, bent to the earth by the flight of their allies, and the loss of Corunna and Ferrol, the two strongest and most important places on the northern coast of the Peninsula, were sunk in the deepest affliction, and for a considerable time gave hardly any signs of life; while the French, almost equally exhausted, rested without any attempt at further exertion, in the important fortresses which they had conquered. Romana alone, with the remnant of Blake's army, which had been routed at Reynosa, still maintained, in the recesses of the mountains, the standard of independence; but his forces were reduced to six or eight thousand men, without either cannon, stores, or resources of any kind. The soldiers were destitute of shoes, almost of clothes, and nothing but the devoted patriotism of their chief, and the extraordinary tenacity of the men, preserved the country from total subjugation. Fearful of permitting even such a wasted band to keep the field, Soult moved a division against him.¹ But the brave Spaniard retreated by Orense to the rugged mountains on the Portuguese fron-

CHAP.
LXII.1809.
1.State of
Galicia and
Asturias
after the em-
barkation of
the British
at Corunna.Atlas.
Plate 48.Feb. 3.
¹ Tor. ii.
205. South.
ii. 224.

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

tier; and having thus got beyond the reach of his pursuers, resolved to maintain himself, like Pelayo in the days of the Moors, in the inaccessible ridges of his country, and await the issue of events, to reappear again in the field in its support.

2.
Advance of
Sir R. Wil-
son to Rod-
rigo, and
return of
Joseph to
Madrid.

Meanwhile Sir Robert Wilson, with the Portuguese levies which he had trained and disciplined, advanced beyond the Spanish frontier, and took post near Ciudad Rodrigo, in Leon. When the news of Sir John Moore's embarkation arrived, he sent his guns, as a measure of precaution, to Abrantes in the rear, but remained himself in the neighbourhood of that fortress, where he was soon joined by Don Carlos d'España, a Spanish chief, with a few followers. Though their united force was too weak to undertake any operation of importance, yet, by merely remaining where they were, and showing a bold front at a time of such disaster, they did essential service, and kept the spirits of the province from sinking under its misfortunes. And truly the aid of such chivalrous spirits as this gallant officer, to whom scenes of danger were a source of pleasure, was necessary, to prevent the cause of Spanish independence from appearing altogether hopeless, amidst the defection of many who should have taken the lead in its support. Addresses, as already mentioned, had been forwarded to Joseph Buonaparte at Valladolid, from all the incorporations and influential bodies at Madrid, inviting him to return to the capital and resume the reins of government: registers had been opened in different parts of the city for those citizens to inscribe their names who were favourable to his government; and, in a few days, thirty thousand signatures, chiefly of the more opulent classes, had been inscribed on the lists. In obedience to these flattering invitations, the intrusive King had entered the capital with great pomp, amidst the discharge of a hundred pieces of cannon, and numerous, if not heartfelt, demonstrations of public satisfaction: a memorable example of the effect of the acquisition of

Jan. 22.

wealth, and the enjoyment of luxury, in enervating the minds of their possessors; and of the difference between the patriotic energy of those classes who, having little to lose, yield to ardent sentiments without reflection, and those in whom the suggestions of interest, or the habits of indulgence, have stifled the generous emotions of our nature.¹

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

¹ South. ii. 24, 33. Neller-
to, ii. 287,
301. Pièces
Just.

Meanwhile Napoleon, whose ardent mind could as little endure repose in any of his lieutenants as in himself, sent orders to Soult, while he still lay with the bulk of his corps at Ferrol, to prepare immediately for the invasion of Portugal. The plan for this purpose was formed by the Emperor on a grand scale, and apparently promised certain success. Soult himself was to move, with four divisions of infantry and ten regiments of cavalry, numbering in all twenty-five thousand combatants present with the eagles, direct upon Oporto: on the road he was to be joined by Loison, with five thousand more. Lapisse, with nine thousand, was to menace the country from the side of Leon; while Victor, with thirty thousand, who was stationed at Merida, on the eastern frontier of the kingdom, was to co-operate from the side of Estremadura, and take a part in the combined movement on Lisbon. Thus seventy thousand men, from different quarters, were to invade Portugal, in which at that time there were not more than fourteen thousand British and an equal number of native troops, all in a state of extreme discouragement from the reverses in Spain, and the embarkation of the army from the shores of Galicia. So little did Napoleon anticipate any serious resistance in this undertaking, and so deeply was the future career of the British in the Peninsula shrouded from his view, that he calculated that on the 5th February his troops would be at Oporto, and on the 16th before Lisbon. The easy reduction of that capital he confidently anticipated; and after driving the English into the sea, Soult was to co-operate in an expedition against Anda-

3.
Prepara-
tions for
the invasion
of Portugal
by Soult and
Victor.

CHAP.
XLII.

1809.

lusia, and follow the path Dupont had trod to the shores of the Guadalquivir. After reading a despatch from Soult, giving an account of his operations in Galicia and the battle of Corunna, he said—"Everything proceeds well : Romana cannot exist a fortnight longer : the English will never make a second effort : in three months the war will be at an end. Spain may be a la Vendée ; but I have tranquillised la Vendée. The Romans conquered its inhabitants, the Moors conquered them ; and they are not nearly so fine a people now as they were then. I will settle the government firmly ; conciliate the nobles, and cut down the people with grape-shot. They say the country is against me ; but there is no longer a population there ; Spain is, in most places, a solitude without five men to a square league. I will let them see what a first-rate power can effect." ¹

¹ Tor. ii.
264, 265.
Jones, i. 166.
Nap. ii. 164,
165. Belm.
ii. No. 24.
Pièces Just.

4.
Soult's
march
through
Galicia
towards
Oporto.

Soult commenced his march from Vigo, on the coast of Galicia, in the beginning of February, and reached Tuy, on the shores of the Minho, on the 10th of the same month. The river being deep and rapid, and at that season of the year a raging flood, it was no easy matter to pass it in presence of several thousand Portuguese ordenanzas, who occupied the opposite bank, which in that quarter formed the frontier of their country. At length a small flotilla, which was secretly prepared in one of its tributary streams, was sent down during the night, and ferried three hundred soldiers over to the Portuguese shore ; but they were instantly attacked at daybreak by three thousand of the armed bands, the men already landed made prisoners, and the remainder driven back to the opposite bank. This check obliged Soult, after leaving his heavy cannon at Tuy, to ascend the banks of the river, through horrible roads, to Orense, in order to take advantage of the bridge there over the Minho ; and his advanced guard reached that town in time to secure that important passage before it could be destroyed. Still this gallant resistance of the Portuguese

Feb. 15.

Feb. 17.

Feb. 20.

on their frontier was attended with important effects ; for such was the fatigue of his troops, that the French general was unable to resume his march for Oporto till the 4th March, which rendered it impossible for him to reach Lisbon before the English reinforcements, under Mackenzie and Sherbrooke, had arrived there in the beginning of April. Hardly had he left Orense, taking the road for Chaves and Oporto, when his advanced guard overtook the rearguard of Romana, which was withdrawing before him, at Monterey, and defeated it with the loss of nearly a thousand killed and wounded, and as many prisoners. Romana, upon this, separated himself from the Portuguese general Silviera, with whom he had been endeavouring to concert operations, and defiled by mountain paths to Braganza, from whence he made for the valley of the Sil, and the direction of Asturias ; while the Portuguese militia, now left to their own resources, were driven back, fighting all the way, to Chaves, a fortified town, which was immediately invested, and capitulated on the 13th, with fifty pieces of cannon and ramparts in tolerable repair : an acquisition of great importance, as it gave the invaders a solid footing within the Portuguese frontier.¹

CHAP.
LXII.
1809.

March 4.

March 6.

¹ Operations
de M. Soult,
50, 115.
Nap. ii. 180,
187. Belm.
i. 61, 62.
South. ii.
214, 231.

Having established the depot of his army, and left his sick and wounded, as well as stragglers, who were very numerous, in this stronghold, Soult set out on the 17th for Oporto, taking the rout of Entre-Douro-e-Minho, in preference to that of Tras-os-Montes, in consequence of the number of deep and difficult streams which required to be crossed in the latter province. The road through the romantic and beautiful mountains of the upper province, however, passed through a series of defiles equal to any in Europe in strength and intricacy ; and the French troops were not long in experiencing the resources which the ancient military institutions of the kingdom offered for resistance to an invading army. At every step they met with an incessant and harassing

5.
And through
Entre-
Douro-e-
Minho.
March 17.

CHAP.
LXII.1809.
March 20.

opposition, which both retarded their march and fatigued the soldiers; and it was not till the 20th that they arrived in sight of Braga, which was occupied by General Freire, with two thousand regular troops and twenty thousand ordenanzas, of whom, however, only five thousand were armed with muskets, the remainder being a confused rabble with pikes, clubs, or pruning-hooks. Justly distrustful of such a tumultuary body in presence of an equal number of French soldiers, Freire evacuated Braga, and was taking the road for Oporto, when the multitude, suspecting treachery, mutinied, put him to death, and forced the command on General Eben, a Hanoverian officer in the Portuguese service, who had gained their confidence by his activity in organising the new levies. Eben, thus forced to fight, made the best dispositions which the circumstances would admit; but it speedily appeared how totally unfit such an undisciplined body was to make head against the imperial veterans. A well-concerted attack from three French divisions soon proved successful: the Portuguese, utterly routed, fled on all sides, having lost all their artillery, and above three thousand men slain on the spot. So exasperated were the victors at some cruelties exercised by the peasants on their stragglers, that they took few prisoners; and such was the reciprocal feeling of hatred excited in the breasts of the natives, that when the French entered Braga after their victory, they found it totally deserted by its inhabitants.¹

¹ Operations
de M. Soult,
115, 142.
Belm. i. 63,
64. Tor. ii.
339, 340.
Nap. ii. 196,
198.

6.
Prepara-
tions for
the defence
of Oporto.
March 29.

No force now existed in the northern provinces to arrest the progress of the invaders; for though Silveira, at the head of ten thousand men, still kept his footing in the mountains on the eastern frontier, yet he was rather in their rear, and it was not to be expected that his irregular force could interpose any serious obstacles in the way of the farther advance towards the Douro. Thither, accordingly, Marshal Soult bent his steps, after resting his troops some days at Braga; and on the 28th

he appeared on the north bank of that river, before Oporto. The means of defence there were very considerable, and the inhabitants were animated with the most unbounded hatred of the French, both from the experience of former wrongs and recent injuries. But regular soldiers and arrangements were wanting to turn to proper account the ardent passions and fervent zeal of the people. The Bishop of Oporto was at the head of affairs ; a warlike and courageous prelate, whose patriotic zeal, not less than his political ambition, had shone forth conspicuous since the first French invasion of the Peninsula.

A series of fieldworks, dignified with the name of an intrenched camp, had been thrown up on the north of the city, which were armed by one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon ; and fifteen hundred regular troops had been collected as a reserve to support any part of the line which might require assistance. In appearance the preparations were most formidable ; but there was little of real military strength in them. The people, however, were animated with the most enthusiastic spirit ; all night the tocsin sounded from the churches, and at daybreak on the 29th, being Good-Friday, a tumultuary body of twenty-five thousand men hurried forth and occupied the redoubts.¹

But such a crowd of citizens, even though animated by an ardent spirit, is seldom capable of withstanding, except behind regular ramparts, the assault of disciplined soldiers. Having completed his arrangements and distracted the enemy's attention by demonstrations against their flanks, Soult bore down with the weight of his force against their centre. Two redoubts, which flanked the main road in that quarter, were carried after a stout resistance ; and the fire from thence having raked great part of the remainder of the Portuguese line, a general panic took place, and the whole rushed in wild confusion into the town. The French cavalry instantly charged the flying mass, now incapable of opposing any

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

¹ Belm. i.
63, 64. Tor.
ii. 340.
Jones, i.
194. Nap.
i. 201, 207.

7.
Bloody
action be-
fore that
town,
which is
stormed.
March 29.

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

resistance, through the city ; the horsemen galloped, cutting them down in vast numbers, right through the streets, to the edge of the Douro ; such was the multitude which thronged the bridge, that part of it sank under the weight, and hundreds were precipitated into the river ; but, even after this catastrophe, the crowd from behind pressed on to avoid the bloody sabres of the imperial dragoons, and forced those in front headlong into the waves. Boats, hastily collected, to receive the wretched throng, were as quickly sunk by the fire of the French artillery, which had now come down to the water's edge, and discharged grape incessantly on the mass in the stream. The river was covered with dead bodies, among which numbers of those of women and children were to be seen : and before the French made themselves masters of the town, four thousand corpses encumbered the banks of the Douro. Even in this extremity, however, some traces of the ancient Portuguese valour were to be discerned ; and a body of two hundred devoted patriots, who had taken refuge in one of the neighbouring churches of the city, resolutely refused all proposals of surrender, and were slain to the last man. When the French soldiers were fairly masters of the town, their passions were strongly excited, in addition to the usual fury of an assault, by the cruelties which had been exercised by the inhabitants on some of the prisoners who had fallen into their hands : and although Marshal Soult exerted himself to the utmost to arrest the disorders, tranquillity was not restored until about eight thousand Portuguese had fallen, and the city had undergone all the horrors which are usually the fate of places taken by storm.¹

¹ Tor. ii.
340, 341.
Nap. 201,
207. Belm.
i. 63, 64.
South. iii.
245, 250.
Jones, i.
194, 195.

8.
Operations
by Ney in
Galicia after
Soult's de-
parture.

Whilst Soult was thus, amidst blood and carnage, forcing a hateful domination upon the northern provinces of Portugal, Marshal Ney, who had been left in charge of Galicia and Asturias, was maintaining a harassing and desultory warfare with the undaunted moun-

taineers of those rugged provinces. The Marquis Romana, after his check at Monterey already noticed, had defiled in the direction of Pont Ferrada, on the great road from Benevente to Corunna; and having accidentally discovered a French twelve-pounder, and some ammunition and balls, in a hermitage near Villa Franca, he took advantage of it to commence an attack upon the castle of that town, garrisoned by a French battalion, and after a siege of seven days forced it to capitulate. Eight hundred prisoners were taken on this occasion—a success which, loudly magnified by common rumour, so elevated the spirits of the Spaniards in these mountainous regions, that, in less than a fortnight, twenty thousand men were assembled round Romana's standards. Upon this, Ney, who deemed it high time to put a stop to this alarming progress, marched out of Corunna at the head of ten thousand men, with the design of giving battle to the Spanish general wherever he could find him. He advanced to Lugo, the point where the chief roads of the country intersect each other; but Romana, who had no intention of hazarding his raw troops, who were totally destitute of artillery or cavalry, in a general action with the French veterans, suddenly shifted his quarters, and, leaving Galicia with part of his troops, entered Asturias with the bulk of his forces, with the design of rousing the population and animating the resistance of that province. Ney followed upon his footsteps, and marched across the mountains to Oviedo, the capital of the latter province. King Joseph, who deemed it of the highest importance to stifle in the outset the formidable insurrection which, on the appearance of Romana, broke out in that quarter, on account of its vicinity to the great line of communication with France, directed at the same time against it considerable forces from other quarters.¹

CHAP.
LXII.
1809.

March 17.

April 20.

May 13.

¹ Belm. i.
77, 78. Tor.
ii. 327, 328.
Jones, i.
209.

Kellermann, who came up from Leon with nine thousand men, crossed the lofty ridge of Pajares a few days

CHAP.
LXII.1809.
9.And of Kellermann in
Asturias.
May 19.
May 22.

May 18.

May 29.

¹ Belm. i.
77, 79. Tor.
ii. 327, 331.
Jones, i.
209, 210.

after, and, having put to flight a corps of two thousand Spaniards who attempted to dispute the passage, descended to Pola, in the neighbourhood of Oviedo ; while, in three days afterwards, Bonnet, with a third column, eight thousand strong, made his appearance at the passage of the Deba, on the coast road, and threatened the Asturian capital, by the highway from France. Ballasteros, who, with ten thousand of Romana's troops, endeavoured to defend the passage of that river, was defeated with the loss of two thousand men. These strong divisions had been largely reinforced by the troops of Mortier's corps, which had been transferred to Old Castile after the fall of Saragossa, and had its headquarters at Valladolid. The concentration of such formidable forces rendered it impossible for the Spaniards to defend Oviedo. Ney arrived on the 18th of May on the Nora, and forced the bridges of Pennafior and Gallegos, and on the day following entered Oviedo. Meanwhile Romana, having left General Ballasteros in command of his troops, who retired from the valleys into the higher and inaccessible parts of the mountains, embarked at Gijon on the day following, and made sail for Ribadio, on the northern coast of Galicia, from whence he made his way across the hills to his brave followers, who still maintained themselves on the mountains in the interior of that province ; and, joining his old soldiers near Mondoñedo, reappeared in undiminished strength in the valley of the Sel. Astonished at his active adversary having thus escaped him, Ney lost no time in retracing his footsteps, and marched direct for Lugo ; and on the 29th met Marshal Soult at that place, whither he had arrived on his retreat from Portugal, after his defeat by Sir Arthur Wellesley, in the manner to be immediately noticed.¹

To complete the picture of the state of affairs in the adjoining provinces of Spain, when Sir Arthur's memorable career began, it remains to notice the situation of

Estremadura and New Castile after the departure of Napoleon from the Peninsula. After the fall of Madrid, the Duke del Infantado, who commanded the army of the centre, which had fallen back towards la Mancha, with great difficulty collected twenty thousand men at Cuença in new Castile. So little, however, were the Spanish generals at this period aware of the inferiority of their troops to the French, notwithstanding all the disasters which they had undergone, that no sooner had he received accounts of the march of Napoleon with his Guards and Ney's corps to attack Sir John Moore on the Carrion, in the end of December, than, deeming the capital now denuded of its principal defenders, he advanced to co-operate in the movement upon it. Victor, Jan. 4. having received early intelligence of his approach, set out to meet him with fourteen thousand foot and three thousand horse; and having defeated the advanced guard under Venegas, at Tarancon, the whole fell back Jan. 10. to a strong position in front of Ucles, where they awaited the attack of the enemy. The battle took place on the 13th January, and proved to the Spanish troops Jan. 13. one of the most disastrous of the whole war. Victor, perceiving that the left of the enemy was the weakest part of their line, threw the bulk of his forces against that wing; it was speedily routed, and the reinforcements which Venegas sent up to its support were successively driven back. The whole army now retreated; but this retrograde movement was speedily converted into a disorderly flight by the impetuous charges of the terrible French dragoons. Fifteen hundred men were slain on the spot; nine thousand prisoners were taken, with the whole artillery, standards, and baggage of the army. This battle destroyed almost all the remains of the Spanish regular army; and the host which was thereafter collected by Cartaojal, who was appointed to succeed the Duke del Infantado in the command in the defiles of the Sierra Morena, consisted almost entirely of

CHAP.
LXII.1809.
10.Total defeat
of the
Spanish
army of
the centre
at Ucles.

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

¹ Belm. i.
56. Tor. ii.
211, 219.
Rocca,
Guerre
d'Espagne,
110, 113.

11.
Rout of the
Spaniards
at Ciudad
Real.

raw and inexperienced levies, upon whom no reliance whatever could be placed. The French disgraced their victory by the most inhuman cruelties ; and, after subjecting the clergy and principal inhabitants of Ucles to every indignity, bound sixty-nine, two and two together, and massacred them, as in the Reign of Terror, some even in the public slaughter-houses. At the same time, three hundred women, the wives or daughters of the victims, who made the air resound with their shrieks at this atrocious iniquity, were delivered over, immediately after, to the passions and brutality of the soldiers ; and great numbers of the prisoners taken in battle were murdered in cold blood, on the plea of reprisals.¹

After this disaster, the Spanish armies who had escaped from the rout of Ucles, and fled from the Somo-Sierra pass, fell back in two divisions : one towards the Sierra Morena, on the road to Seville ; the other, in the direction of Merida and Almaraz, with a view to the support of Badajoz. The first was under the command of Cartaojal ; the latter of Cuesta. Cartaojal, when his whole detachments were called in, had still, in the end of February, sixteen thousand infantry and three thousand horse, with which he watched the French under Sebastiani, who lay with fifteen thousand men at Toledo ; while Cuesta, with fourteen thousand infantry and two thousand cavalry, was opposed to Victor on the Tagus, in Estremadura. The Duke d'Albuquerque commanded the advanced division of Cartaojal's army, consisting of nine thousand foot-soldiers and two thousand horse, with which he advanced in the middle of February towards Toledo, from Carolina in the Sierra Morena, where the remainder of the corps lay. Cartaojal in person soon assumed the command, and this ill-concerted attack, with part only of the Spanish force, depressed by defeat, on a superior body of the enemy, flushed with victory, led to the result which might easily have been antici-

pated. Sebastiani hastily assembled twelve thousand men, with whom, as the enemy approached Toledo, he gave battle at Ciudad Real, and routed them in half an hour, with the loss of a thousand slain, all their guns, and three thousand prisoners. The remainder fled into the Sierra Morena, where they were quickly reinforced by new levies from Andalusia and Granada; and Sebastiani, satisfied with his success, resumed his position in the capital of la Mancha.¹

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.
March 27.

¹ Nap. i.
208, 213.
Tor. ii. 279,
289. Belm.
i. 68, 69.

A still greater disaster awaited the army collected in Estremadura, under the orders of Cuesta. This general, though a brave old veteran, was unhappily of a headstrong and obstinate disposition, and, being imbued with his full share of Castilian pride and ignorance, was equally incapable of taking counsel from the lessons of experience, or yielding to the advice of abler persons than himself. These peculiarities, which appeared painfully conspicuous in the course of the campaign, on the first occasion when he acted in concert with Sir Arthur Wellesley, soon brought about a very serious disaster on the plains of Estremadura. Early in March, Victor received orders from Joseph at Madrid forthwith to pass the Tagus, in order to co-operate in Napoleon's design of the general attack upon Portugal; while at the same time Lapisse, who, with a division of eight thousand men, was stationed near Salamanca, was ordered to advance to Abrantes. Cuesta at this time lay on the banks of the Tagus, and occupied the famous bridge of Almaraz—a noble structure, five hundred and eighty feet long, and one hundred and thirty-four feet high, built by the town of Placencia during the reign of Charles V., and rivalling the greatest works of the Romans in solidity and grandeur. But as the enemy had possession of the bridges of Talavera and Arzobispo, farther up the river, it was impossible to prevent them from crossing; and the destruction of one of the arches by Cuesta's order was to be lamented, as it destroyed a precious monument

12.
March of
the army
of Cuesta
to Medellin.

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

¹Tor. ii.
284, 286.
Nap. ii. 213,
218, Belm.
67.

13.
Their total
rout there.

of former greatness, without contributing in any material degree to present security. Cuesta, finding himself assailed along the line of the Tagus by twenty thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry, with forty-two guns, fell back at all points, and, crossing the ridge of mountains which separates the valley of the Tagus from that of the Guadiana, took post at Medellin, on the latter river, where he contrived, by assembling all his detachments, to collect twenty thousand infantry, four thousand horse, and twenty pieces of cannon. The bridge of Medellin was not seriously contested by the Spaniards, who were drawn up in the form of a half-moon, in a line about a league in breadth, a little to the south of the river. Notwithstanding his inferiority in numbers, having only fifteen thousand foot and three thousand horse on the spot, Victor immediately advanced to the attack.¹

The right wing of the Spaniards, where their best troops were placed, made a brave resistance, and for two hours not only held the enemy in check, but sensibly gained ground, and already the shouts of victory were heard in that quarter. Encouraged by these favourable appearances, Cuesta moved forward his centre, which also drove back the enemy ; and, deeming the victory now secure, the Spanish general sent forward his cavalry to charge. No sooner had they come into fire, however, than the whole horse, instead of charging the enemy, turned about and fled, trampling their own victorious infantry under foot, and spreading disorder and alarm through the whole rear. The consequences of such pusillanimous conduct, in an army composed in great part of new levies, were immediately fatal. Great part of the Spanish troops took to flight. Still, however, the victorious centre stood firm, and gallantly, by a point-blank discharge, repelled the first efforts of the victorious French dragoons ; but Victor, upon this, instantly brought up cannon, and made such gaps in their ranks by his volleys of grape, that the French dragoons succeeded in

breaking through, and then the whole army took to flight. The French horse pursued the fugitives for several miles with great slaughter. The whole Spanish artillery fell into the hands of the victors; and their total loss, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, did not fall short of ten thousand men, while that of the French did not exceed a tenth part of the number. So complete was their rout, that Cuesta, who fled with a few horsemen into the recesses of the Sierra Morena, could not, for some days after the battle, rally a single battalion of infantry; and nothing but the strength and intricacy of these mountains, and the vague apprehension excited by the disaster experienced in the last campaign by Dupont, beyond them, prevented Victor, in the first moments of dismay occasioned by this victory and that of Ciudad Real, from penetrating into Andalusia, and planting the French eagles in triumph on the minarets of Seville.¹

CHAP.
LXII.
1809.

While these disastrous events were prostrating the Spanish strength on the plains of la Mancha, and on the banks of the Guadiana, Marshal Soult lay inactive at Oporto, and was far from making that use of his important conquest which might have been expected from his vigour and ability. He had become master, indeed, of an opulent commercial city, abounding in resources of all kinds, and containing one hundred and ninety pieces of heavy cannon, besides immense warlike stores and magazines; and his advanced posts, pushing forward to the south of the Douro, subdued the whole country as far as the Vauga. But not only had the obstinate hostility of the population considerably weakened his army during its march from Galicia, but it had strongly impressed him with the risk of advancing farther into a country animated by such feelings, until he received more accurate accounts of the force and intentions of the English army, and advices of the co-operation of Lapisse and Victor on the eastern frontier of the kingdom.² Nor was this all. While he himself overcame all hostility in front, the elements of a

¹ Nap. ii.
213, 226.
Tor. ii. 284,
289. Belm.
67, 68.

14.
Situation
and views
of Soult at
Oporto, at
this period.

² Tor. ii.
332, 334.
Belm. i. 64,
65. Vict.
et Cong.
xix. 19, 20.

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

most serious resistance had again sprung up in the country he had passed, and blows of no inconsiderable magnitude had been struck, both by the Spaniards and Portuguese, on the fortified posts and detachments left in his rear.

15.
Progress of
the insurrec-
tion in
Galicia and
the north of
Portugal.

April 6.

March 27.

March 20.

March 30.
1 Belm. i.
64, 65. Tor.
ii. 332, 334,
336. Lond.
i. 317, 318.
Vict. et
Cong. xix.
19, 20.

The Galician insurgents, taking advantage of the absence of Soult in Portugal, and Ney with the greater part of his corps in Asturias, had collected in great strength round the depots and armed stations in the southern parts of their province. Tuy, containing the principal reserve of Soult's corps, and Vigo, garrisoned by thirteen hundred men, left in guard of the military chest, were soon surrounded each by several thousand armed peasants ; and although the former, after a blockade of several weeks, was relieved by succours despatched from Oporto, the latter, with its whole garrison and treasure, fell into the hands of the Spaniards. A still more serious blow was struck by Silveira with his Portuguese levies, who had taken refuge, on the French invasion, in the wildest recesses of Tras-os-Montes. That enterprising officer, issuing from his retreat as soon as the French had passed on, suddenly appeared before Chaves, now filled with the sick and magazines of their army, entered the town without opposition, and in four days afterwards made himself master of the castle, with thirteen hundred prisoners. Encouraged by this success, he advanced on the traces of the French army ; reached Braga, which he evacuated upon hearing of the fall of Oporto, and crossed over to the valley of the Tamega, where he made himself master of the important town and bridge of Amarante—a pass of great strength, the possession of which barred the principal line of communication from Oporto to Tras-os-Montes and the northern provinces of the Peninsula.¹

But, in addition to these untoward circumstances, the situation of Soult, both from the intrigues with which he was surrounded, and those in which he himself was engaged, was one of a very peculiar and almost unprece-

dented kind. While the example of thrones having been won by soldiers' hands in the case of Napoleon, Murat, and more recently Jerome and Joseph, had inspired the marshal with extravagant ideas of the destiny which might await him in the Lusitanian provinces, the dreadful privations which they had recently undergone, and the apparently interminable extent of the wars in which the Emperor was engaged, had laid the foundations of wide-spread disaffection among his followers. Thus a double set of intrigues was simultaneously going forward in the army at Oporto. While the French party in the northern provinces of Portugal were preparing an address, which in a few days was signed by thirty thousand persons, to Soult, praying him to assume the sovereignty of their country, and that officer, yielding to the flattering illusion, was preparing proclamations in the name of Nicholas I., King of Portugal,^{1*} and endeavouring, though without success, to gain the consent of his generals of division to the usurpation, a numerous body of superior officers in his army were organising the ramifications of a vast conspiracy among the troops, the object of which was to revolt against the authority of Napoleon, restore a republican government in France, seize Soult and such officers as should adhere to his fortunes, and put a stop to the devastating wars which he was waging to the detriment alike of his country and the world. Secret advances, in relation to both these projects, were made to Sir Arthur Wellesley soon after he landed;² but that cautious general, without implicating himself or his government in such dark designs, continued steadfast in his plan of terminating all these chimerical projects by

CHAP.
LXII.1809.
16.Extraordi-
nary in-
trigues in
Soult's
army at
this period.¹ Thib. vii.
546. Sav.
iv. 128.
Wel. Desp.
May 7, 1809.
Gurw. iv.
288.² Tor. ii.
344, 345.
Wellesley
to Lord
Castlereagh,
May 7, 1809.
Gurw. iv.
288. Sav.
iv. 128.

* "It is certain that a proclamation was printed at Soult's headquarters, addressed to the generals of division, to be published as an order of the day; in which he announced himself King of Portugal and Algarves, subject only to the approval of the Emperor, of which he entertained no doubts. Delaborde, one of his generals, who positively refused, as well as Loison, to go into the project, long after showed a copy of this proclamation at Paris."—THIBAUDEAU, vii. 546, 547.

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

expelling Soult from Portugal by force of arms ; while Napoleon wisely and magnanimously overlooked the whole affair, and wrote to Soult that "he recollected nothing but Austerlitz." *

17.
Landing of
Wellington
in Portugal.
April 22.

It was in this situation of affairs in Spain and Portugal that Sir Arthur Wellesley—who shall hereafter be called WELLINGTON—LANDED AT LISBON ; and from this time forward, the historian, in narrating the annals of the Peninsular campaigns, instead of a confused and involved narrative of separate actions and operations, which no art can render interesting to the reader, and which it requires no small effort in the writer himself to apprehend, finds himself embarked on a connected and consecutive stream of events, at first inconsiderable, and scarcely attended to in the shock of vast armies on the Danube, but which steadily increased in depth and magnitude, until it attracted the attention of all Europe, and finally overwhelmed the empire of Napoleon in its waves.

18.
Deplorable
state of
Portugal
at that time.

Nothing could be more deplorable than the situation of Portugal when Wellington landed at Lisbon. Cradock's preparations to evacuate that capital, unavoidable and prudent at the time of the Corunna retreat, had not only depressed to the highest degree the spirit of the people, but aroused, to an extent which had become truly alarming, the general suspicion of treachery in all classes. Lisbon was in the most violent state of agitation ; the cry of treason had been raised ; a British uniform no longer secured the wearer from insult, and on the contrary often exposed him to assault. Couriers were robbed of their despatches ; guards insulted on their posts ; and to such a pitch had the public audacity risen, that the same precautions against mob-violence which had been taken by Junot for his security after the defeat of Vimeira, were now resorted to by Cradock from the pressure of the same

* Soult had particularly distinguished himself in that battle. See *Ante*, Chap. XL. § 129.

necessity. Nor was this spirit confined to Lisbon. In Oporto, the disposition to insult the British was still more decided than in the capital, and the government of the multitude yet more decidedly pronounced. From the Minho to the Tagus, the country was in a state of tumult and insubordination: the soldiers, scattered without regard to military system, and unpaid, lived at free quarters on the inhabitants; while, all government and law being in abeyance, the peasantry of the country in bands, and the populace of the towns in mobs, intercepted the communications, appointed or displaced the generals at pleasure, and massacred without mercy all persons of whom they were suspicious.¹

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

¹ Maxwell's
Life of Wel-
lington, i.
505. Napier,
ii. 380, 381.

Nothing daunted by this inauspicious and apparently desperate state of things, Wellington, with that far-seeing wisdom and unconquerable firmness which is the foundation of everything great in this world, was calmly preparing the means of an efficient and permanent defence of the country. Before leaving London, he had submitted to government a memorandum, which became the foundation of the whole defensive system afterwards pursued in that country; and to the steady prosecution of which, through all the vicissitudes of fortune, the ultimate deliverance of the Peninsula and Europe is, beyond all question, to be ascribed.* Appreciating with perfect accuracy, as the event subsequently proved, the military advantages of Portugal, intersected by mountains, inhabited by a brave

19.
Wellington's plan
for the defence of
Portugal.

* "I have always been of opinion that Portugal might be defended whatever might be the result of the contest in Spain; and that, in the mean time, the measures adopted for the defence of Portugal would be highly useful to the Spaniards in their contest with the French. My opinion was, that the Portuguese military establishments, upon the footing of 40,000 militia, and 30,000 regular troops, ought to be revived; and that, in addition to these troops, his Majesty ought to employ an army in Portugal, amounting to about 30,000 British troops, including about 4000 cavalry. My opinion was, that even if Spain should have been conquered, the French would not have been able to overrun Portugal with a smaller force than 100,000 men; and that, as long as the contest should continue in Spain, this force, if it could be put in a state of activity, would be highly useful to the Spaniards, and might eventually have decided the contest.

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

¹ Maxwell,
i. 504, 510.
Lond. i. 212,
215. Nap.
ii. 426, 434.

and hardy peasantry, lying on the flank of Spain, and backed by the ocean, that true base of British military operations, he gave it as his decided opinion, that, even if Spain were conquered, thirty thousand Portuguese regular troops, supported by forty thousand militia, and thirty thousand English foot-soldiers, including four thousand cavalry, could defend the country, and render it impregnable to a less force than a hundred thousand French. These judicious suggestions were acted upon without reserve by the government: the old military institutions of the monarchy were revived; thirty thousand men were ordered to be raised by conscription, and taken into British pay; the militia and ordenanzas were called out; British officers were sent over in great numbers for the troops of the line; and General Beresford was appointed commander-in-chief of the Portuguese forces, and soon communicated to the whole the inestimable advantages of regular organisation, vigorous energy, and strict discipline.¹

20.
Great effect
of these
measures in
Portugal.

Immense was the effect produced by these energetic and well-timed measures. The very suspending the preparations for embarkation, and the forward movement of the troops, operated like a charm in stilling the public discontent. Confidence generally revived when these measures were followed by the taking so large a body of Portuguese troops into British pay, the calling out of the militia, landing of stores, artillery, and reinforcements from England, and other measures, which indicated a

"The British force employed in Portugal should, in this view of the question, not be less than 30,000 men, of which number four or five thousand should be cavalry, and there should be a large body of artillery.

"The whole of the army in Portugal, Portuguese as well as British, should be placed under the command of British officers. The staff of the army, the commissariat in particular must be British; and these departments must be extensive in proportion to the strength of the whole army which will act in Portugal, to the number of detached posts which it will be necessary to occupy, and with the view to the difficulties of providing and distributing supplies in that country. In regard to the details of these measures, I recommend that the British army in Portugal should be reinforced, as soon as possible, with some companies of British riflemen, and with 3000 British or German cavalry;

serious resolution to defend the country. The bands of robbers and desperadoes who infested the roads, speedily found employment, regular pay, and good rations in the army; and these advantages, to which the soldiers had been entire strangers under the corrupt administration of their old government, ere long attracted the daring and energetic from every part of the country to the patriotic standards. These feelings of reviving hope and increased confidence were worked up to the highest pitch by the landing of Sir Arthur Wellesley, with a brilliant staff, at Lisbon on the 22d April. Into every department his presence seemed to infuse new life and confidence. Men spoke no longer of defensive measures; the occupation of Oporto by Soult was forgotten: the question in every one's mouth was, "When shall we move forward?" The delight of the Portuguese was unbounded: they hailed the British hero as if conquest and his name were one. A British uniform no longer attracted obloquy: it universally awakened respect. All day long the streets were crowded with joyous assemblages, congratulating each other on the happy event; and at night the city was illuminated, even in its obscurest streets and alleys. In the theatres pieces were hastily got up, in which Victory was made to crown the hero with laurels, and address him in strains which, though then savouring of the language of panegyric, were afterwards found to be but anticipations of the truth.¹

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

¹ Lond. i.
104, 110.
Maxwell, i.
507, 510.

Two different systems of operation presented them-

that the complement of ordnance with that army should be made thirty pieces of cannon, of which two brigades should be nine-pounders; that these pieces of ordnance should be completely horsed; that twenty pieces of brass (twelve-pounders) ordnance upon travelling carriages, should be sent to Portugal, with a view to the occupation of certain positions in the country; that a corps of engineers for an army of 60,000 men should be sent there, and a corps of artillery for sixty pieces of cannon.

"I understand that the British army now in Portugal consists of 20,000 men, including cavalry. It should be made up to 20,000 infantry at least, as soon as possible, by additions of riflemen and other good infantry, which by this time may have been refitted after the campaign in Spain."—WELLINGTON'S *Minute*, London, 9th March 1809; GURWOOD.

CHAP.
LXII.1809.
21.Reasons for
operating
first against
Soult at
Oporto.

selves to the choice of the English general, when he took the command in Portugal. The first was to move to the eastward, and combine an attack with Cuesta on Victor, in the valley of the Tagus. This plan, which was strongly recommended by the Spanish general, had the advantage of striking at once at the heart of the enemy's power, and, by compelling the concentration of his principal forces to cover Madrid, would prove a seasonable relief to the patriot bands in all quarters, and prepare the means of renewed resistance in the remote provinces, especially that of Andalusia. Wellington was not insensible to the importance of these considerations; and he declared, two days after his arrival in Portugal, that he was convinced, "the French would be in serious danger in Spain, only when a great force shall be collected which shall oblige them to concentrate their troops; and a combined operation of the force in this country, with that under Cuesta, may be the groundwork of such extended operations." But, on more mature consideration, it was justly deemed more expedient to commence operations by clearing the northern provinces of Portugal of the enemy. Much dissatisfaction would with reason be excited in that country, if, while one-third of its territory was still in the hands of the enemy, a portion of the native and all the allied forces should be employed in a foreign operation; the English army might be exposed to considerable hazard, if, while far advanced into the interior of Spain, its line of communication were to be menaced by the advance of Soult from Oporto. And it was of no small consequence, in a war in which so much depended on opinion and early success, to engage at first in an operation within the compass of the British army alone, rather than in one in which much would depend on the co-operation of the Spanish forces, too clearly proved, by woful experience, to be incapable of standing in the field the shock of the imperial legions.¹

¹ Well. to Frere, 24th Apr. 1809. Gurw. iv. 247 and 249, to Lord Castlereagh.

Operations against Soult being resolved on in the first

instance, Wellington moved his force in two columns towards the north of Portugal. The right, consisting of six thousand foot and one thousand horse, under Beresford, was to advance by Visen and Lamego, towards the upper Douro, in order to co-operate with Silviera, who, it was hoped, still held the line of the Tamega, and the important bridge of Amarante; and thus turn Soult's left flank, and cut him off from any retreat by Braga, or through Tras-os-Montes to Astorga and Leon. The left, under Wellington in person, after assembling at Coimbra, consisting of fifteen thousand infantry and sixteen hundred cavalry, was to move directly by the Vauga upon Oporto. Hopes were entertained that a considerable part of Soult's army might be cut off in its retreat from the Vauga to the Douro; and measures had been very skilfully taken to surprise the enemy and secure that object. But the French general got information of the approach of the English, and the conspiracy in his own army, just in time to prevent the catastrophe. The principal leaders were suddenly arrested, and the troops rapidly withdrawn behind the Douro; the bridge over which, at Oporto, was prepared for firing, and all the boats that could be discovered were brought over to the northern bank of the river. At the same time, Loison was despatched to the rear, with a strong division, to clear the banks of the Tamega, and secure the bridge of Amarante; and, after some days' sharp fighting, he succeeded in that object, and dislodged Silviera from that important post. Mackenzie, meanwhile, with three thousand British and four thousand Portuguese troops, was moved forward to Alcantara, and the eastern frontier of the kingdom, to observe Lapisse and Victor, and afford some protection to that exposed part of the Portuguese dominions.¹

CHAP.
LXII.1809.
22.Marches
against
Soult.

May 2.

¹ Well. to Mackenzie, 1st May 1809. Gur. iv. 265, and 273. Nap. ii. 283-5. Tor. ii. 345, 346.

The British advanced posts fell in with the enemy on the 11th May; but, by a rapid retreat, the latter succeeded in extricating themselves from a situation of some peril, crossed the Douro, and burned the bridge of boats at

CHAP.
LXII.1809.
23.Commence-
ment of the
passage of
the Douro.

May 12.

Oporto. The English standards soon appeared in great strength on the southern bank, and the French battalions lined the northern shore; but the broad Douro rolled between the hostile forces, and it appeared next to impossible, without either bridge or boats, to cross the river in face of a nearly equal force. Early on the morning of the 12th, however, General Murray succeeded in collecting some boats four miles up at Avintes; and three having, by great daring, been obtained by Colonel Waters, by crossing in a small skiff opposite the Seminary at Oporto, twenty-five of the Buffs were quickly ferried over in the first boat, and, the two others rapidly following, about a hundred men got a footing under cover of that building, unperceived by the enemy. The anxiety of the people, however, soon drew the enemy's attention to the spot; and no sooner were the red coats perceived, than a tumultuous noise of drums and shouts was heard in the city, and confused masses of the enemy were seen hurrying forth in all directions, and throwing out clouds of sharpshooters, who came furiously down upon the Seminary. The building was soon surrounded; the fire of the enemy visibly augmented faster than that of the British; General Paget, who commanded, was struck down severely wounded; and the eager gesticulations of the citizens from the houses on the opposite bank, implored relief for their heroic allies, now apparently doomed to destruction.¹

¹ Well.
Desp. 12th
May 1809.
Gurw. iv.
297. Belm.
i. 72. Tor.
ii. 345, 347.

24.
Which is at
length suc-
cessfully
effected.

So violent was the struggle, so critical the moment, that Wellington himself was on the point of crossing to share the dangers of his advanced guard; and it was only the entreaties of his friends, and his own just confidence in GENERAL HILL, who now commanded, which prevented him from doing so. By degrees, however, the fire of the British artillery, consisting of twenty guns, placed on the heights of Villa Nova, on a projecting promontory of the southern bank, opposite the Seminary, became so powerful, that it drove the enemy from all sides of the building, excepting the iron gate on the north, where the Buffs

were a match for them. Some daring citizens crossed over with large boats to Sherbrooke's division, farther down the river, which was soon ferried over in considerable bodies; and hesitation became visible in the French ranks, which was increased to confusion, when Murray's columns, on the extreme right of the British, began to appear and threaten their communication with Amarante and the great line of retreat. Horse, foot, and cannon, now rushed tumultuously towards the rear; the city was hastily evacuated, amidst the enthusiastic cheers of the people. Hill's central column, strongly reinforced by the 48th and 66th regiments which had crossed, debouched fiercely from the Seminary, and, by repeated volleys on the confused crowds of the flying troops, threw them into utter disorder; and nothing but the inactivity of Murray on the right, who did not make the use he might have done of his advantageous position on the flank of the retreating host, preserved them from total ruin. As it was, they lost five hundred killed and wounded, five guns, and a large quantity of ammunition, in the action: seven hundred sick were taken in the hospital, and fifty French guns in the arsenal; and so complete and unexpected was the surprise, that Wellington, at four o'clock, quietly sat down to the dinner and table-service which had been prepared for Marshal Soult.¹

Rowland Hill, afterwards Lord Hill, one of the most distinguished officers of the British army, who first rose to eminence in this combat, was second son of Sir John Hill of Hawkstone, in Shropshire, and was born there on August 11, 1772. He was educated, in the first instance, at Rugby; but completed his instruction for the army at the military academy at Strasburg. At the age of sixteen he obtained a commission in the 38th regiment, from which he was afterwards transferred to the 27th; and he made his first essay in arms, like Napoleon, at the siege of Toulon, as he closed his military career in combating the same commander at Waterloo. At Toulon he was slightly

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

¹ Wel. Desp.
12th May
1809. Gur.
iv. 297, 301.
Nap. ii. 287,
291. Belm.
i. 72, 73.
Tor. ii. 345,
347.

25.
Early his-
tory of
General
Hill.

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

¹ *Ante*, ch.
xxxiv. § 30.

wounded; and having been intrusted by Sir David Dundas with bringing home the despatches, he was offered by Colonel Graham, (afterwards Lord Lynedoch,) who had served as a volunteer in the same fortress, a majority in the 90th regiment, which Graham had just raised. He was soon made lieutenant-colonel in the same regiment, at the head of which he gallantly combated in the battle of Alexandria, on the 21st March 1801.¹ His conduct on that occasion was so conspicuous that he was presented by the Pasha of Egypt with a superb sword as a mark of gratitude. In 1803 he was made major-general; and he commanded a brigade under Wellesley at the battles of Roliça and Vimeira. He was afterwards engaged in Sir John Moore's retreat; did good service in the battle of Corunna, and directed the rearguard which covered the embarkation of the troops on the following day. In 1809 he was again sent out to the Peninsula, at the head of a brigade; and, on Sir Edward Paget being wounded, succeeded to the command in the Seminary, which he held with heroic courage, till assistance was ferried over from the opposite side. Thenceforward his career needs no biography: his deeds are emblazoned on the brightest page of England's glory: he will be found by Wellington's side on every field of fame, from the Douro to Waterloo.

26.
His character.

Like Suwarroff, Hill had the rare felicity of never having been beaten in the field, but, unlike him, he enjoyed his sovereign's honours and country's gratitude to an advanced old age. Without the great and overruling talents requisite in a general-in-chief, no officer ever possessed a rarer assemblage of qualities fitted to render him an incomparable second in command. Brave in action, sagacious in design, secret in counsel, cool in danger, prompt in execution, he conducted with admirable skill the enterprises intrusted to his direction; and by the suddenness and rapidity of his strokes against detached columns, as well as the firmness and intrepidity of his conduct in general actions, contributed essentially

to the general success of the war. No British general inspired such dread to the French officers, and none so frequently caught them at a disadvantage, and struck such sudden and weighty blows against them. When it was known in subsequent times that Hill had set off from the British position at the head of a body of light troops, the French generals stood to their arms from the Douro to the Sierra Morena. Simple and affable in his manners, humane and benevolent, he united the virtues of a citizen to the qualities of a hero, and was beloved by all classes. With the unanimous concurrence of the army, he was afterwards made commander-in-chief, which exalted situation he held, till, full of years and honour, he retired in 1842, a few months before his death.

To have crossed such a river as the Douro, in presence of such a general as Soult, with a force little, if at all, superior to the French, was a most brilliant opening of the campaign, and was justly regarded as reflecting as much credit on the daring and skill of the English general, as it cast a shade on the vigilance and circumspection of the French marshal. But Napoleon's troops were, beyond all others, capable of remedying such a disaster; and, notwithstanding the confusion into which they had been thrown by their precipitate retreat, before nightfall order was restored, and the army securely rested under the protection of a vigilant and powerful rearguard. Next morning Soult was quietly resuming his march for Amarante, when he received the stunning intelligence that that important post, commanding the only bridge and defile over the Tamega, and the only line of retreat practicable for artillery, was already in the hands of the enemy. In effect Beresford, having crossed the Douro farther up, had attacked Loison's outposts at Amarante on the morning of the 12th with such vigour, that he fell back from that post in the direction of Guimaraens.¹

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

27.
Soult's
hazardous
situation.

¹ Well.
Desp. 18th
May 1809.
Gurw. iv.
315. Tor.
ii. 346.
Belm. i. 72.

CHAP.
LXII.1809.
28.His vigorous
and able
measures to
extricate
himself.

Soult's situation now seemed all but desperate: the well-known strength of the bridge of Amarante precluded the hope that it could be forced by discouraged and retreating troops, now that it was held by regular British and Portuguese soldiers; the great road to Braga was already in the possession of the enemy, as they held Oporto, from which it issued; and it could be regained only by cross hill-roads, totally impracticable for artillery, and almost impassable for mules or horses. Yet not a moment was to be lost: already the British outposts began to appear, and the thunder of their horse-artillery was heard at no great distance. The energy of the French general, however, now fully aroused, was equal to the crisis. He resolved to abandon his artillery, ammunition, and baggage, and make his way, with all imaginable expedition, across the mountains to the Braga road. This resolution was immediately carried into execution. All the powder which the men could not carry was blown up near Penafiel on the morning of the 13th; and the French army, abandoning its whole carriages, rapidly ascended the valley of the Sousa by roads almost impracticable, even for the cavalry; rejoined Loison at Guimaraens; and continued its passage over the mountains, leaving Braga on its left.¹

¹ Belm. i. 72,
74. Well,
Desp. 18th
May 1809.
Gur. iv.
315. Tor.
ii. 346, 347.

29.
His dis-
astrous
retreat and
extreme
danger.

Notwithstanding the sacrifice of his whole *matériel*, however, Soult's retreat was extremely disastrous, even to the soldiers of his army. When he rejoined Loison at Guimaraens, it became necessary to abandon all the artillery and ammunition belonging to that division; heavy rains, ever since the 13th, impeded the progress of the troops through the mountains; the stragglers multiplied at every step; frightful defiles, beside raging torrents, formed their paths; the shoes of the soldiers were worn out; they could hardly bear their arms; and, with the whole remaining mules and horses, all the sick and wounded fell into the hands of the British. The streams, everywhere swollen by the excessive floods,

were impassable, except by their bridges ; and the arch of Ponte Nova, over the roaring torrent of the Cavado, was the only line of retreat which lay open, after the occupation of the road to Braga by Wellington and of that to Amarante by Beresford. This bridge was occupied, and had been partially destroyed by the peasants ; unless it could be regained, the hour of surrender had arrived, for the army was struggling through a narrow defile between awful precipices, almost in single file. Wellington, in close pursuit, thundered in the rear, and would infallibly attack on the following morning.¹

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

May 15.

¹ Gurw. iv.
315. Vict.
et Conq.
xix. 39, 44.
Nap. ii. 294,
298. Tor.
ii. 347, 349.

In this extremity the heroic courage of Colonel Dulong, who in the dark, with twelve grenadiers, crept along a narrow ledge of masonry which was left of the arch, surprised the Portuguese guards, and made himself master of the bridge, extricated the army from this apparently hopeless situation, and opened up the road to Montalegre, where the whole arrived perfectly exhausted, and in woful plight, late on the evening of the 17th. Soult continued his retreat across the Galician frontier, reached Orense on the 26th, and on the day following met Ney at Lugo, who had returned from his Asturian expedition, and dislodged an irregular body of twelve thousand peasants who were blockading three French battalions in that place. "His condition," says Jomini, "was much more disastrous than that in which General Moore had traversed the same town six months before." The French disgraced this retreat by the most savage cruelty. The peasants were massacred, and the houses burned by them, along the whole line of march, without remorse : but their own losses were very severe, amounting to about a fourth part of the whole troops which were attacked on the Douro, besides all their artillery, ammunition, and baggage, and even a considerable part of their muskets.²

30.
And narrow
escape into
Galicia.

May 17.

² Jom. iii.
335. Well.
Desp. 18th
and 22d May
1809. Gur.
iv. 315, 326.
Nap. ii. 294,
300. Tor. ii.
347, 349.
Belm. i. 74,
75. Vict. et
Conq. xix.
39, 44.

After this important success, Wellington returned to Oporto, from whence he moved his troops forward as

CHAP.
LXII.1809.
31.Wellington's pre-
parations
for opera-
tions in
Estrema-
dura.

rapidly as possible to Abrantes, and engaged in active preparations for co-operating with Cuesta, and advancing through Estremadura towards Madrid. Victor had not improved his important victory at Medellin so much as might have been expected, especially considering the great amount and excellent quality of his cavalry, which were of inestimable importance in the level plains that run up to the foot of the Sierra Morena. But the operations of the English general were impeded for above a month by the want of money, of which at this period he bitterly complained, and which led him to suspect at the time that government had engaged in an enterprise beyond their strength. In truth, however, the finances of Great Britain, as the event proved, were fully equal to the strain; and the difficulty arose entirely from the extraordinary scarcity of *specie* at that crisis, in the British islands, arising in some degree, perhaps, from the profuse though unavoidable issue of paper to carry on the prodigious mercantile operations and national expenditure of the period, but much more from the vast consumption and requisitions of the French and Austrian armies during the campaign on the Danube, which caused every guinea to be bought up at an extravagant premium for the use of these continental armies. At the same time, the want of warlike experience was severely felt in the army, both on the part of the officers and soldiers. The commissariat, in all its branches, was very defective. Released by a month's intermission from active operations, from the excitement and dangers of actual warfare, the troops gave themselves up to disorders of every kind. Plunder was universal along their line of march; the country, for miles on either side, was filled with stragglers; and the instant the common men got out of the sight of their officers, outrages were committed without end on the defenceless inhabitants, who had hailed their arrival as deliverers. To such a height did these evils arise, that Wellington, in several regi-

ments, directed the roll to be called every hour; he largely augmented the powers and force at the disposal of the provost-marshal; and, in the bitterness of his heart, more than once wrote to government, that the British army, "excellent on parade, excellent to fight, was worse than an enemy in a country, and liable to dissolution alike by success or defeat."¹

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

¹ Gurw. iv.
407. Well.
to Castle-
reagh, 17th
June 1809.

Doubtless the large arrears of pay due at this time to the army, amounting to £300,000, and in several regiments embracing two months' pay, contributed in a great degree to this disgraceful state of things; and it is interesting to trace the early difficulties of that commander in training his troops to the duties of real warfare, who afterwards declared, in the just pride of experienced achievement, "that with the army he led from Spain into France, he could have gone anywhere and done anything." But these facts are highly valuable, as demonstrating how essentially the military is an art dependent upon practice for success; how little even rigid discipline, gallant officers and admirable equipment, can compensate for the want of actual experience; what difficulties the commander had to contend with, who was compelled thus to educate his officers and soldiers in presence of the enemy; how much allowance must be made for the disasters of the Spanish troops, who, without any of these advantages, were at once exposed to the shock of the veteran legions of Napoleon; and what must have been the sterling courage of those men, who, even when thus inexperienced, were never once brought in the Peninsula into fair combat with the enemy, that they did not successfully assert the inherent superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race.²

32.
Great disorders of the
British
troops, and
their causes.

² Well.
Desp. to
Lord Castle-
reagh, &c.
30th May;
7th, 16th,
and 17th
June 1809.
Gurw. iv.
343, 352,
307, 346,
355, 363,
400.

Remittances to an adequate amount in gold bars and specie, having, in consequence of the pressing representations of the English general, been at length obtained, on the 25th of June, for the army, and a more efficient system of control established by his unceasing vigilance

33.
Plan of a
combined
movement
on Madrid.
June 27.

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

July 1.

July 20.

among the troops, Wellington, in the end of that month, commenced his march from Abrantes, in the direction of Alcantara and the Spanish frontier. His plan at first was, that Cuesta should maintain himself in some strong position towards the foot of the Sierra Morena, and if possible amuse Victor so as to retain him in that quarter, to the south not only of the Tagus, but of the Guadiana; while he himself moved on Placencia and Talavera, so as to cut off his retreat to Madrid, and prevent his junction with the forces of Sebastiani in la Mancha, or those of Joseph in the capital. This design, however, which had everything to recommend it, was found to be impracticable from the obstinacy of Cuesta, who refused to retire any farther back than the banks of the Guadiana, and the impossibility of finding any position there, where there was the least chance of his making a successful stand if attacked by Victor. The English general, therefore, was compelled to alter his views, and adopt the more hazardous plan of a junction and combined operation of the two armies. With this view, the British army marched by Castelbranco, Coria, and Placencia; while the Spanish advanced by the bridges of Almarea and Arzobispo. Victor fell back as Wellington advanced, and the two armies effected their junction at Oropesa, on the 20th July; while Sir Robert Wilson, with his brave Lusitanian legion and three thousand Spaniards, advanced on their left from the Alberche to the mountains of the Escorial, and with that force approached and actually put himself in communication with Madrid. The forces which thus menaced the capital were very considerable. The English were twenty-two thousand strong, of whom three thousand were cavalry, with thirty guns; Cuesta had thirty-two thousand infantry, and six thousand horse, with forty-six cannon; and Venegas, who was to advance on Toledo, and join the other two armies in the neighbourhood of the capital, was at the head of twenty-three thousand infantry, and three thou-

sand cavalry—in all above eighty-five thousand men, but of different nations, independent of each other, and of whom the British alone could be relied on for movements in the field in presence of the enemy. Beresford, meanwhile, with fifteen thousand Portuguese, established his headquarters at Fuente Guinaldo, near Ciudad Rodrigo; but his duty was merely to protect the frontier from insult, and observe the enemy at Salamanca, not to take any active part in the important operations which were in contemplation.¹

The approach of armies so considerable, all converging towards the capital, produced an alarming excitement—the sure proof, as Jomini observes, of the judgment with which the enterprise had been conceived. Joseph no sooner received intelligence of the formidable forces with which he was menaced, than he despatched the most pressing orders to Soult and Ney, who were at Astorga on the frontiers of Leon, and Mortier, who lay at Valladolid, to unite their forces and descend as rapidly as possible through the pass of Puerto de Banos, which forms the only line of communication through the great central chain of Spanish mountains from the valley of the Douro to that of the Tagus, to Placencia, so as to menace the communications of the English army with Lisbon. He himself, leaving only three weak battalions in the Retiro, marched with six thousand of his guards and five thousand other troops towards Toledo, which was assigned as the general rendezvous of all his forces: Sebastiani was hastily ordered to the same place, whither also Victor fell back from Talavera. Before doing so, however, Victor narrowly escaped destruction on the 23d, when the British troops were all in readiness for the attack, and Victor was exposed alone to their blows. The events which followed leave no room for doubt, that if Wellington had attacked on that day, even unsupported by the Spaniards, he would have gained a glorious victory;² but it could have led to no beneficial result,

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.
¹ Wel. Desp.
 June 17.
 July 1, July
 24, 1809.
 Gurw. iv.
 403, 499.
 Belm. i. 89,
 90. Nap. ii.
 339. Vict.
 et Conq.
 xix. 278,
 279.

34.
 Prepara-
 tions and
 forces of
 the French
 generals.

July 25.

² Wel. Desp.
 July 24,
 1809, Gurw.
 iv. 499.
 Nap. ii. 372,
 373. Tor.
 iii. 36, 37.
 Belm. i. 91,
 92. Jom.
 iii. 340, 344.

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

35.
Joseph
advances
towards
Talavera.

menaced as the British army was by the descent of an overwhelming force in its rear. Cuesta refused to fight on that day, as his troops were not prepared; and next morning, when the columns of attack were formed at daylight, the enemy had disappeared, having retired in the night in the direction of Toledo.

Finding himself, on the 25th July, by the concentration of these forces, at the head of fifty-five thousand brave veterans, animated by repeated victories, and under the direction of experienced officers, Joseph deemed himself sufficiently strong to resume the offensive; and, contrary to the strenuous advice of Jourdan, and, indeed, the dictates of common sense on the subject, gave orders to advance, before the co-operation of Soult, Ney, and Mortier, who could not arrive on the Tagus before the 1st of August, could be relied on. He quickly repulsed the vanguard of Cuesta, which, elated by the continued retreat of the French before them, were advancing in a disorderly manner, dreaming of Madrid and the Pyrenees; and, on the 26th, the French troops, driving Cuesta's videttes before them, reappeared in great strength in front of TALAVERA. The English general had only sent two brigades in pursuit of the enemy beyond the Alberche, having already begun to experience that pressing want of provisions and means of transport, which soon had such important effects on the issue of the campaign; and, in consequence, having resolved not to advance with the main body of his force beyond that stream, till some arrangement was made for the supply of these necessary articles.¹

¹ Gurw. iv.
504. Belm.
i. 91, 92.
Nap. ii. 386.

36.
Description
of the field
of Talavera.

Atlas,
Plate 61.

The whole allied army took post at Talavera, in a battle-field well calculated, by the diversity of its character, to bring into action the various qualities of the troops who were there to combat for the independence of the Peninsula. On the right, the dense but disorderly array of the Spaniards, with their flank resting on the Tagus, occupied the town and environs of Talavera, with

the olive woods, intersected with enclosures, which lay along its front, filled with light troops, and their numerous artillery planted in an advantageous position along the line, and commanding all the avenues by which it could be approached. Far beyond the enclosures, the British stood in the open field on the left, on the uneven ground which extended from the olive woods to the foot of the hills, forming the first range of the Sierra de Montalban. A deep ravine, in the bottom of which flowed the Portina rivulet, lay at the foot of these hills, and formed the extreme British left; the streamlet turning sharp round, and winding its way through to the Tagus at Talavera, ran across the front of the whole allied line. On the heights on one side of it, the French were placed in a strong position, with their batteries on the right, placed on some lofty ridges commanding a great part of the field of battle. Right opposite to them stood the British line, on a similar range of eminences, and their guns also sweeping the open slope by which they were to be ascended. In the centre between the two armies, there was a commanding hillock or mount, on which the English had begun to construct a redoubt, and on which some Spanish guns were placed. But it was evident, that on the possession of the heights on the British left, the fate of the approaching battle would in a great degree depend.¹*

CHAP.
LXII.
1809.

¹ Wel. Desp.
July 29,
1809, Gurw.
iv. 504.
Belm. i. 91,
92. Kausler,
536. Nap. ii.
386, 387.

* The exact French and allied force at Talavera, as obtained by Kausler from the War-office at Paris, was as follows:—

FRENCH.			ALLIES.		
		Guns.			Guns.
Royal Guards, ...	5,000		British infantry } (28½ battalions.)		16,663 30
<i>Victor's corps.</i>			Artillery, engineers, &c.,		1,287
Infantry and artillery, .	18,890	30	Cavalry, ...		3,047
Cavalry, ...	3,781				20,997
<i>Sebastiani's corps.</i>					
Infantry and artillery, .	17,100	30	Spanish infantry and		
Cavalry, ...	3,670		artillery, ...		33,000 70
<i>Reserve divisions.</i>			Cavalry, ...		6,000
Infantry and artillery, .	7,681	20			59,997 100
75 bat. 39 squad. . . .	56,122	80			

—See KAUSLER, 535; and NAPIER, ii. 361.

With officers and non-commissioned officers, &c., the British were about 22,000; the sabres and bayonets only appearing on the rolls.

CHAP.
LXII.1809.
37.Bloody
action on
the 27th
July.

About three o'clock on the afternoon of the 27th, Victor's advanced guards approached the British outposts, stationed beyond the Portina streamlet, and immediately commenced an attack. Some of the English regiments, which had then seen fire for the first time, were thrown into confusion by the suddenness of the onset, and Wellington, who was with the advanced posts, narrowly escaped being made prisoner; while ten thousand Spaniards on the right were so alarmed by the French light cavalry riding up to them and discharging their pistols, that they broke after a single discharge of their muskets, and, flying tumultuously several miles to the rear, gave out that all was lost. Wellington, however, brought up some veteran troops to the scene of danger, and checked the disorder; while at the same time the British advanced posts, covered by the brave 45th regiment, and the 5th battalion of the 60th, retired to the position of the main body on the other side of the stream. Encouraged by this success, Victor, as night approached, was induced to hazard an attack on the English left, stationed on their line of heights; and for this purpose Ruffin was ordered to charge with his division, supported by Vilatte, while Lapisse fell on the German Legion on their right, so as to prevent assistance being rendered from the other parts of the line.¹

¹ Gurw. iv.
504, 505.
Nap. ii. 392.
Jom. iii.
344. Vict.
et Conq.
xix. 282,
283.

38.
Repulse of
the attack
on the
British
left.

The forces which thus were brought into action by the French were above twenty thousand men, and the assault was so quick and vigorous, that though Colonel Donkin* gallantly repulsed the corps which attacked his front, his left flank was at the same moment turned by several French battalions, who, having advanced unperceived through the valley, suddenly appeared with loud shouts on the heights in his rear. General Hill, however, with the 29th regiment, charged them without an instant's delay, and drove them down the hill; and immediately bringing up other battalions, formed a convex front,

* Afterwards General Sir Rufane Donkin.

facing outwards, which effectually covered the British left. It was full time ; for Lapisse soon after opened a heavy fire on the German Legion on the right, and fresh battalions of Ruffin's division, emerging from the hollow, resolutely advanced to storm the heights on the left. It was now dark : the opposing lines approached to within thirty yards of each other, and the frequent flashes of the musketry enabled the dauntless antagonists to discern each others' visages through the gloom. For a few minutes the event seemed doubtful ; but soon the loud cheer of the British soldiers was heard above the receding roar of the musketry, and the French fell back in disorder into the hollow, while Lapisse drew off on the right ; and the soldiers on either side, worn out with fatigue, sank to sleep around the fires of the bivouacs.¹

Not discouraged by this bloody repulse, which cost him above eight hundred of his best troops, Victor, contrary to the advice of Jourdan, who contended strenuously that all offensive operations should be suspended till Soult was sufficiently near to threaten the enemy's communications, prevailed on Joseph to permit him to renew the battle on the following morning. The centre of the British being deemed too strong, by reason of the ravine which covered their front, it was determined to make the attack on the heights on the left. At eight o'clock, Ruffin's division again advanced to the attack, supported by Villatte's, and the French troops with an intrepid step ascended to the summit of the hill ; while the artillery on both sides kept up a vehement fire, and soon made frightful chasms in the opposing ranks. Having gallantly made their way to the summit, the French instantly closed with Hill's division, and for half an hour a desperate struggle took place, in the course of which Hill himself was wounded, and his men were falling fast. But the French loss was still greater ; insensibly their line gave ground, and at length, being forced back to the edge of the slope, the whole broke, and were hurled in

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.

¹ Nap. ii.
392, 295.
Wel. Desp.
iv. 505, 506.
Jom. iii.
344, 345.
Kausler,
537. Vict.
et Conq.
xix. 282,
284.

39.
Desperate
battle on the
28th.

CHAP.
LXII.

1809.
 1 Wel. Desp.
 July 29.
 Gurw. iv.
 506. Vict.
 et Conq.
 xix. 285,
 286. Jom.
 iii. 345, 346.
 Nap. ii. 396,
 400.

wild disorder to the foot of the hill. Fearful, from these repeated attacks, that the enemy would at length succeed in turning his left, Wellington placed his cavalry at the entrance of the valley, obtained from Cuesta the succour of Bassecourt's division, which he stationed on the hills beyond its outer side, and two guns to reinforce Hill's batteries, which were bravely served by the Spanish gunners, and rendered good service during the remainder of the day.¹

40.
 Temporary
 suspension
 of the battle
 during the
 heat of the
 day.

The extreme heat of the day now for a few hours suspended the combat, during which the lines were reformed on both sides, the ammunition-waggons replenished, and the wounded withdrawn to the rear. In this interval Joseph held a council of war, in which Jourdan again renewed his counsel that they should retire to the Alberche, and Victor urged that they should recommence the attack. The latter advice prevailed, chiefly in consequence of the arrival of a courier from Soult, announcing that he could not arrive at Placencia till the 4th August, and of the threatening advance of Venegas, who was already near Aranjuez. Meanwhile, the troops on either part, overcome by thirst, straggled down in great numbers to the streamlet which ran in the bottom of the ravine which separated the two armies. Not a shot was fired, not a drum was beat; peaceably the foemen drank from the opposite banks of the same rill; and not unfrequently the hands which had so recently before been dyed in mutual slaughter, were extended and shaken across the water in token of their mutual admiration of the valour and constancy displayed on both sides. Wellington, meanwhile, was seated on the grass on the top of the hill which had been so obstinately contested, eagerly surveying the enemy's movements, which indicated a renewal of the conflict with redoubled forces along the whole line. At this moment Colonel Donkin rode up to him, charged with a message from the Duke d'Albuquerque, that Cuesta was betraying him.² Calmly continuing his survey, Wellington

¹ Lord Castlereagh's Speech, Feb. 1, 1809, Parl. Deb. xv. 293. Vict. et Conq. xix. 285, 286. Nap. 398. 401. Wel. Desp. Gurw. iv. 506, 507.

desired Donkin to return to his brigade! In a few minutes a rolling of drums was heard along the whole French line; the broad dark masses of the enemy appeared full in view; and, preceded by the fire of eighty pieces of artillery, forty thousand men advanced to the attack.

The French columns came down their side of the ravine at a rapid pace, and though a little disordered by crossing the stream, mounted the opposite hill with the utmost intrepidity. On the extreme British right, Sebastiani's corps fell with the utmost fury on General Campbell's division, and by their loud cries indicated the confidence of immediate victory; but their attack was in column and the English were in line; and the inherent vice of that arrangement, when directed against steady troops, became at once apparent. The British regiments which stood against the front of the mass, drawn up three deep, kept up an incessant rolling fire on the enemy; while those on either side, inclining forwards and directing their fire against both flanks of the column, soon occasioned so frightful a carnage that even the intrepidity of the imperial veterans sank under the trial, and the whole broke and fell back in confusion. On rushed Campbell's division, supported by two regiments of Spanish infantry and one of cavalry, who were inspired with unwonted steadiness by the example of their allies, and, pushing the disorganised mass before them, completed their discomfiture, and took ten pieces of cannon. At the same time, Ruffin's and Villatte's divisions were descried marching across the valley on the enemy's extreme right, in order to turn, by the foot of the Sierra de Montalban, that blood-stained hill which they had in vain sought to carry by assault. Wellington immediately ordered the 1st German hussars and 23d dragoons to charge the column in the bottom of the valley.¹

On they went at a canter, but soon came to a hollow cleft which lay right across their path, and which it seemed impossible to cross. The veteran German, Arentschild,

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41.
Heroic
valour of
the British
on their
right.

¹ Kausler,
538. Wel.
Desp. July
29, 1809.
Gurw. iv.
506. Vict.
et Conq.
xix. 287,
289.

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42.Desperate
charge of
cavalry on
the left.

with characteristic coolness, reined up his men on the edge of the hollow ; but Seymour, at the head of the 23d, with true English hardihood, plunged headlong down, though half of his men fell over each other in wild confusion in the bottom, where Seymour was wounded. The remainder under Ponsonby, coming up by twos and threes, charged right on, and disregarding the fire of Villatte's columns, through which they passed, fell with inexpressible fury on Strolz's brigade of chasseurs in the rear, which, unable to resist the shock, opened its ranks to let them through. The heroic British dragoons, however, after this marvellous charge, were assailed, when blown and disordered by success, by a regiment of Polish lancers and a body of Westphalian light horse, and broken with great slaughter ; the survivors, not half of those who went into action, found shelter on the broken ground behind Bassecourt's division of Spanish infantry on the mountains beyond.¹

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xix.
287, 289.
Nap. ii.
401, 403.
Kausler,
538. Wel.
Desp. July
29, Gurw.
iv. 506.

43.
Imminent
danger in
the centre.

While these terrible conflicts were going on upon the two wings of the British, the centre, where Sherbrooke commanded, and the German Legion and Guards were placed, was exposed to a still severer trial. The great batteries, mounting fifty guns, which there stood right opposite to the British line, at the distance of only half cannon-shot, made fearful chasms in their ranks ; and the English guns, greatly inferior both in number and weight of metal, could make no adequate reply. Under cover of this fearful storm, Lapisse's division crossed the ravine in their front, and, ascending the opposite hill concealed by the smoke, got close to the British line, and already set up the shouts of victory. They were received, however, by a close and well-directed volley, followed by a general rush with the bayonet, which instantly threw the assailants back in great confusion ; and the Guards, following fast on their heels, not only drove them down the hill, but crossed the rivulet at the bottom, and were soon seen in disorderly array streaming up the opposite

bank. Here, however, they met the enemy's reserve, who advanced in close order through the throng; powerful batteries, firing grape and canister, tore down whole ranks at every discharge on one flank, and some regiments of cavalry threatened the other. The Guards, thus sorely pressed, gave way and fled in confusion; the disorder quickly spread to the Germans on their flank, and the whole British centre appeared broken.¹

The danger was imminent; but Wellington, who had foreseen the consequences of the gallant but inconsiderate advance of the household troops, had provided the means of restoring the combat. Instantly pushing forward the 48th regiment, which was in reserve, he directed it against the right flank of the French, who, in their turn, were somewhat disordered by success. When this gallant regiment got into the throng, and began to ascend the slope beyond the stream, it was so beset by the crowd of fugitives, that it became necessary to open the ranks to let them through: but immediately closing again, it advanced in beautiful array against the flank of the pursuing French, and, by a destructive volley, compelled them to halt. The Guards and Germans immediately rallied, faced about, and renewed their fire; while Cotton's brigade of light cavalry having come up on the other flank at the same time, the advance of the French was effectually checked in the centre. This was their last effort; their columns now drew off in good order, and retired across the Alberche, three miles in the rear, which was passed in the night. Shortly after the firing ceased, a frightful incident occurred: the grass, dried by the excessive heat, accidentally took fire, and, the flames spreading rapidly over part of the field, scorched cruelly numbers of the wounded of both armies.²

Such was the glorious battle of Talavera—the first for nearly a century past in which the English had been brought to contend on a great scale with the French, and which in its lustre equalled, in its ultimate effects exceeded,

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¹ Jom. iii.
347, 348.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
286, 287.
Gurw. iv.
508.

44.
And final
victory.

² Wel. Desp.
Gurw. iv.
508. Nap.
ii. 403, 406.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
286, 288.
Jom. iii.
347, 348.

45.
Results of
the action.

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the far-famed days of Cressy and Azincourt. Two-and-twenty thousand British had engaged for two successive days, and finally defeated, above forty-five thousand French; for the aid which the Spaniards afforded in the battle was very trifling, and not more than ten thousand of the enemy, including the King's guard, remained to watch their lines in the olive woods of Talavera, who never fired a shot. Seventeen pieces of cannon, several tumbrils, and some hundred prisoners, taken in fair fight, were the proud trophies of this hard-fought action. The loss on both sides was enormous; but greater on that of the French than the British, owing to their greatly superior numbers and their system of attack in close column. The latter lost 6268 in the two days: that of the French is now ascertained, from the returns in the French War-office, to have been 8794.¹

¹ Kausler, 539. Nap. ii. 405, 406. Well. Returns, Ann. Reg. 1809. App. to Chron. Jom. iii. 348.

46.
Great effect of this battle on public opinion in Europe.

"This battle," says Jomini, "at once restored the reputation of the British army, which during a century had declined. It was now ascertained that the English infantry could dispute the palm with the best in Europe." In vain the mercantile spirit, which looks for gain in every transaction, and the virulence of faction, which has ever accompanied the noblest events in history, fastened on this far-famed field, complained of the subsequent retreat, and asked for durable results from the laurels of Talavera. These cold or selfish calculations were answered by the exulting throb of every British heart; the results asked for were found in the subsequent glorious career and long-continued security of England. Far from every generous bosom be that frigid spirit which would measure the importance of events only by their immediate gains, and estimate at nothing the lasting effect of elevation of national feeling! Character is the true strength of nations: historic glory is their best inheritance. When the time shall come that the British heart no longer thrills at the name of Talavera, its fruit will indeed be lost, for the last hour of the British empire will have struck.

On the day following the battle, General Craufurd, with three thousand fresh troops, joined the English army, and replaced nearly half of those who had been disabled in the battle. This gallant band had, at the distance of nearly sixty miles from the field of battle, met several Spanish runaways from the action of the 27th, who told them the English army was defeated and Lord Wellington killed. Induced only to press on the more eagerly by this intelligence, Craufurd, after giving his men a few hours' rest, and withdrawing fifty of the weakest from the ranks, hurried on with the utmost expedition with the remainder, and reached Talavera at eleven on the morning of the 29th, having passed over, in regular order, *sixty-two English miles* in the preceding twenty-six hours. This march deserves to be noted as the most rapid made by any foot-soldiers of any nation during the whole war, as that made by Lord Lake with the English cavalry, before the battle of Furruckabad, was the extreme stretch of horsemen.¹ But, notwithstanding this seasonable reinforcement, Wellington had soon sufficient cause for anxiety; for, on the 2d August, as he was preparing to march to Madrid, intelligence arrived that Soult, with a very large force, had penetrated without opposition through the Puerto de Banos, the Spaniards stationed in that important pass having abandoned it without firing a shot. From thence he had entered Placencia, directly in the British rear and threatening their communications with Lisbon, with thirty-four thousand men.²

This formidable and unlooked-for apparition was the result of the junction of the whole forces of Soult, Ney, and Mortier, in consequence of the pressing orders of Joseph; who, after uniting near Salamanca, had descended by forced marches through Leon and the mountains forming the northern barrier of Estremadura, and appeared just in time to interfere with decisive effect upon the vital operations on the banks of the Tagus. Their concentration at this crisis was owing to

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47.

March of
Soult, Ney,
and Mortier
into Wel-
lington's
rear.Atlas,
Plate 48.¹ *Ante*, ch.
xlix. § 84.² Wellington
to Lord Ber-
esford,
August 4.
Gurw. iv.
531, 533.
Nap. ii. 412,
413.48.
Events in
Galicia and
Asturias
which had
led to the
junction of
these forces.

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June 27.

a very singular and fortuitous chain of events. Soult, after he had brought the ghastly crowd which formed the remains of his once splendid corps to Lugo, and delivered the garrison imprisoned there by the Galicians, deeming himself not strong enough to effect anything among the rugged mountains of that province, and having no magazines or stores to recruit his troops, resolved to make the best of his way into Old Castile. He accordingly set out in the end of June for Benavente and Zamora, and put his troops into cantonments on the Esla in the beginning of July. Meanwhile Ney, thus left in Galicia, had experienced a variety of disasters. After the conference at Lugo with Soult, he had moved towards Vigo, with a view to regain possession of that important fortress and seaport, and stifle the insurrection which, from the aid of several ships of war in the harbour, was there daily becoming more formidable. To reach it, however, he required to pass the bridge of St Payo, in the valley of Soto-Mayor, where the road crosses the river Octaven. The Spaniards, ten thousand strong, with several pieces of heavy cannon, were there intrenched in a strong position on the opposite side of the river; the bridge was cut; and several gunboats manned by English sailors at its mouth, a short way farther down, prevented the passage from being turned in that direction.¹

¹ Belm. i. 80, 83. Tor. ii. 349, 353. Nap. ii. 324, 326.

49.
Operations
of Ney in
the north,
who evacu-
ates Galicia.

June 7.

Driven thus to carry the passage by main force, Ney led on his troops gallantly to the attack; but the well-sustained fire of the Spaniards defeated all his efforts. He renewed the assault next day with no better success, and, despairing of forcing the position, retired with the loss of three hundred men. Discouraged by this reverse, and finding himself abandoned by Soult in a country swarming with enemies, and extremely difficult for military operations, Ney resolved to retire from Galicia. He was the more confirmed in this resolution, from the opinion which he entertained that he had been scandalously deserted and left to perish by Soult. Under the influ-

ence of these mingled feelings of disappointment and indignation, he abandoned Ferrol and Corunna, and, collecting all his detachments, evacuated the whole province, and reached Astorga in the end of July. Asturias had previously been evacuated by Kellermann and Bonnet, who had arrived at Valladolid on the 20th June in order to co-operate in the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, which at that period was in contemplation, after Santander had been carried by assault by the Spaniards some days before, and retaken, with great slaughter, by the latter of these generals. Thus, by a singular combination of circumstances, at the time when Wellington made his grand advance towards Madrid, Soult, Kellermann, and Bonnet, with above thirty thousand men, were assembled in the north of Leon, ready to descend on his line of communication with Lisbon, and Ney was rapidly following in their footsteps from the extremity of Galicia.¹

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July 22.

July 30.

June 20.

June 10.

June 15.

¹ Belm. i.
80, 83. Tor.
ii. 349, 353.
Nap. ii. 324,
328.

Wellington, thus menaced by a superior force in rear, at the same time that an army defeated, but still greater in number, lay in his front, had still the advantage of a central position between the two; and, if the quality of the whole allied forces had been alike, and he had commanded the whole, he had the means of striking the same redoubtable blows on the right and left, with a force inferior upon the whole, but, including the Spanish troops, superior at the point of attack, which Napoleon dealt out in 1796 to the converging Austrian columns which descended from the Alps for the relief of Mantua. This was the more feasible, as Joseph's army which fought at Talavera, had been divided after the action; the King, with Sebastiani's corps, the reserve and royal guards, having marched towards Madrid, now threatened on the one side by Venegas, who had occupied Aranjuez and passed Toledo, and on the other by Sir Robert Wilson, who was within seven leagues of the capital, and in communication with it.² Doubtless, if Wellington had been

^{50.}
Wellington's plan
to resist
the attack.² Gurw. iv.
524, 530.
Tor. iii. 48.
Nap. ii. 415,
416. Jom.
iii. 349.

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at the head of fifty thousand British troops, he would have attempted, and probably with success, that resolute game.

51.
He marches
against
Soult,
Ney, and
Mortier.

But though the allied force at Talavera was of that numerical strength, dear-bought experience had demonstrated that no reliance could be placed on any part of it in the field, except the twenty thousand English soldiers. The British general and his whole troops had now seen the Spanish army, and the illusion which had formerly prevailed on the subject had been dispelled. Their artillery, it was ascertained, was for the most part well trained, and had rendered good service on some important occasions ; but their cavalry was wretched, and their infantry, though courageous when standing still resisting an attack, totally unfit to perform movements under fire or in presence of the enemy, without falling into confusion. In these circumstances, it was apparent that a prudent defensive policy was the only one which promised a chance of success with an army in great part composed of such troops ; but this was precisely the system which the ignorance and presumption of the Spanish generals rendered them incapable of adopting. Wellington, therefore, to avoid being attacked both in front and rear at the same time, deemed it necessary to divide the allied army ; and he offered to General Cuesta, either to stay with the wounded at Talavera, or march to the attack of Soult, as he chose. The Spanish general preferred remaining where he was ; and Wellington, in consequence, set out from Talavera on the 3d August, taking with him the whole British army, and leaving about two thousand of their wounded in the hospital at Talavera, under charge of the Castilian army.¹

¹ Wel. Desp.
Gurw. iv.
524, 534.
Jom. iii.
349, 350.
Nap. ii. 415,
417. Tor.
iii. 48, 49.

Hardly, however, had the last of the troops left the blood-stained banks of the Alberche, when intelligence arrived that Cuesta was making preparations to abandon Talavera and the English wounded ; and at five o'clock Wellington received official intimation that the Spanish

general had actually put his intention in execution, and was moving after the British army, leaving nearly half the wounded to their fate. Apprehension of being attacked, at the same time, both by Victor and Soult, was assigned as the motive of this proceeding. But the real fact was, that the Spanish general entertained well-grounded apprehensions of the weakness of his own troops, when left to defend an important position against such an enemy as he had seen fight at Talavera, and he felt no chance of safety but in close proximity to the British force. Advices were received at the same time of the arrival of Soult at Naval Moral, on the high-road leading to the bridge of Almaraz, and that his army, which was hourly increasing, was already thirty thousand strong. In these circumstances, Wellington wisely resolved to alter his line of march, and, quitting the road by Almaraz and Alcantara, to move across to the bridge of Arzobispo, and take up a defensive position on the line of the Tagus. This resolution was instantly acted upon; the troops defiled to the left, and passed the bridge in safety: the Spaniards rapidly followed after them; and the bulk of the allied army reassembled at Deleitosa, on the south of the Tagus, on the following day. The bridges of Arzobispo and Almaraz were destroyed, and a rearguard of Spaniards, with thirty guns, was left to defend the former passage. But the French corps, in great strength, were now appearing on the banks of the Tagus: Soult, with three corps, mustering thirty-four thousand men, was in the neighbourhood of Almaraz and Arzobispo; Victor, with twenty-five thousand, having crossed the Tagus at Talavera, was marching down its left bank; and Mortier attacked and defeated the Spaniards at Arzobispo, by crossing the Tagus at a ford a little above the broken bridge, with five thousand horse, and captured all their guns.¹ Nothing now appeared capable of preventing the junction of the whole French armies, and the attack of sixty thousand excellent troops on the allied army,

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52.Cuesta
abandons
Talavera
and the
English
wounded.

August 3.

August 4.

August 5.

August 7.

August 8.

¹Tor. iii. 50,
52. Belm. i.
94. Jom.
iii. 349, 355.
Nap. ii. 417,
426.

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already suffering from extreme want of provisions, exhausted by fatigue, and little capable of withstanding so formidable a force.

53.
The French
generals
separate
their forces.

But the object of delivering Madrid being accomplished, and the allies driven to the south of the Tagus, the French generals had no inclination for farther active operations. Their soldiers, worn out with continued marching, stood much in need of repose ; the recollection of Talavera checked the hope of any successful enterprise to the south of the Tagus, while its banks were guarded by the victors in that hard-fought field ; and the great accumulation of troops around its banks exposed them, equally with the allies, to extreme suffering from want of provisions. These considerations pressing equally on both sides, produced a general separation of force, and suspension of operations, after the combat of Arzobispo.

August 12.

Cuesta, disgusted with his reverses, resigned the command, and his army was broken into two parts ; ten thousand were despatched towards Toledo to reinforce Venegas, who was now bombarding that city, and twenty thousand, under the command of the Duke d'Albuquerque, remained in the neighbourhood of the English army, in the mountains which separate the valley of the Tagus from that of the Guadiana. The French armies also separated : Joseph recalled Victor to support his guards, Dessolles' division, and Sebastiani's corps, in driving Venegas from Toledo ; while Soult and Mortier remained at Talavera, Oropesa, and Placencia ; and Ney retraced his steps to Leon and the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo. But so favourable an opportunity never again occurred of breaking down the English power in the Peninsula. Napoleon never ceased to lament to the last hour of his life that the advice of Soult had not been followed, who wished to take advantage of this concentration of five corps, numbering in all ninety thousand combatants, in the valley of the Tagus, and march at once on Coria and Lisbon.¹ He in consequence soon after dismissed

¹ Nap. ii.
417, 426.
Belm. i. 94,
95. Jom. iii.
349, 357.
Tor. iii. 50,
53.

Jourdan from his situation of major-general to Joseph, and conferred that important situation on Soult.

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54.
Combat at
Puerto de
Banos.

The justice of this opinion appeared in a still more striking manner, from the proof which was soon afforded of the inefficient character of the corps threatening Madrid, which had caused such alarm in the mind of Joseph, as to lead him to break up the noble force which he had accumulated in the valley of the Tagus. Ney, in his way back from Placencia, met unexpectedly, in Puerto de Banos, the division of Sir Robert Wilson, consisting of three thousand Portuguese and as many Spaniards, who were wending their way amidst rocks and precipices, from the neighbourhood of Madrid, to the Portuguese frontier, with which, being ignorant of the strength of the enemy, he endeavoured to stop the French corps. The result of a combat so unequal might easily have been anticipated; Wilson was, after a stout resistance of three hours, dislodged and thrown back on the Portuguese frontier, with the loss of a thousand men. More important operations took place at the same time in the plains of la Mancha. Venegas, during the concentration of the French forces at Talavera, had not only with one of his divisions occupied Aranjuez, with its royal palace, but with two others was besieging and bombarding Toledo. No sooner was Joseph relieved, by the retreat of the English from Talavera, from the necessity of remaining in force on the Alberche, than he moved off, with Sebastiani's corps and Dessolles' division, to attack him.¹

Aug. 8.

¹ Tor. iii.
56, 59. Jom.
iii. 352, 354.
Belm. i. 95.
Gurw. v. 66.

Deceived as to the strength of his adversary, whose force he imagined did not exceed fourteen thousand men, the Spanish general resolved to give battle, and awaited the enemy in a good position at Almonacid. The French had twenty-four thousand foot and four thousand horse in the battle—the Spaniards about an equal force; but the difference in the quality of the troops in the opposite armies soon decided the contest. Encouraged by the

55.
Defeat of
the Span-
iards at
Almonacid.
Aug. 11.

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1809.

ardour of his men, who demanded, with loud cries, to be led on to the combat, Sebastiani commenced the attack without waiting for the arrival of Dessolles' division; a division of Poles, under Sulkowski, attacked a hill, the key of the position, on which the Spanish left rested, while the Germans under Laval assailed it in flank. The crest of the mount was speedily won, and the Spanish left fell back on their reserve, consisting of the soldiers of Baylen; but these rallied the fugitives and stood firm; while Venegas, charging the victorious French in flank, threw them into confusion, and drove them back in great disorder. Victory seemed to declare in favour of the Spaniards, when the arrival of Dessolles and Joseph, with the reserve, restored the combat. Assailed both in front and flank by fresh forces, when still disordered by success, the Spanish troops, after a sharp conflict, fell back; the old Moorish castle of Almonacid, where the reserve was stationed, was carried after a bloody combat; and Venegas, utterly routed, was glad to seek refuge in the Sierra Morena, with the loss of thirty-five guns, nearly all his ammunition, and six thousand killed, wounded, and prisoners. But the loss of two thousand men on the side of the victors, proved with what unwonted steadiness the Spaniards had fought on this occasion.¹

¹ Gurw. vi.
66. Tor. iii.
56, 59. Jom.
iii. 352, 354.
Nap. ii. 431,
433. Belm.
i. 95.

56.
Sufferings
of the
English
army.

For nearly a month after their retreat to the southern bank of the Tagus, the English army remained undisturbed in their position on that river, with their headquarters at Deleitosa. Wellington, informed of the return of Ney to Salamanca, was even preparing to resume offensive operations on its northern bank; with which view he was busied in repairing the broken arch over the Tagus at Almaraz, when the total failure, on the part of the Spaniards, to provide subsistence for the English troops, rendered a retreat to Badajoz, and the vicinity of their own magazines, a matter of absolute necessity. From the moment the English troops entered Spain, they had experienced the wide difference between the

promises and the performance of the Spanish authorities ; and we have the authority of Wellington for the assertion, that, if the junta of Truxillo had kept their contract for furnishing two hundred and forty thousand rations to the English army, the allies would, on the night of the 27th July, have slept in Madrid.¹ But, for the month which followed the battle of Talavera, their distresses in this respect had been indeed excessive, and had reached a height which was altogether insupportable. Notwithstanding the most energetic remonstrances from Wellington, he had got hardly any supplies from the Spanish generals or authorities, from the time of his entering Spain ; Cuesta had refused to lend him ninety mules to draw his artillery, though at the time he had several hundreds in his army doing nothing ; the troops of all arms were literally starving ; during a month which followed the junction of the two armies on the 22d July, they had not received ten days' bread ; on many days they got only a little meat, without salt, on others nothing at all ; the cavalry and artillery horses had not received, in the same time, three deliveries of forage, and in consequence a thousand horses had died, and seven hundred were on the sick list.²

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¹ Gurw. v.
355.² Wel. Desp.
Gurw. v. 10,
11, 12, 22,
24, 52, 57.
Nap. ii. 434.

These privations were the more exasperating, that, during the greater part of the time, the Spanish troops received their rations regularly both for men and horses. The composition of the Spanish troops, and their conduct at Talavera and on other occasions, was not such as to inspire the least confidence in their capability of resisting the attack of the French armies. Their men, hardly disciplined and without uniform, threw away their arms and dispersed the moment they experienced any reverse, and permitted the whole weight of the contest to fall on the English soldiers, who could not in the same way escape. These causes had gradually produced an estrangement, and at length a positive animosity, between the privates and officers of the two armies ; an angry correspondence

57.
Total inefficiency of the Spanish troops and authorities. Wellington retires to Badajoz.

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1809.

August 22.

took place between their respective generals, which widened the breach; and at last Wellington, finding all his representations disregarded, intimated his resolution to withdraw the British troops to the frontiers of Portugal, where they might be maintained from their own magazines. The Spanish authorities, upon this, made the most earnest protestations of their wish to supply the wants of the British soldiers, and offered to divide the magazines at Truxillo with them, or even put them entirely at their disposal. But Wellington had ascertained that this boasted resource would not supply his troops for one day; the soldiers were daily becoming more sickly; and, justly deeming the very existence of his army at stake if these evils any longer continued, the English general, on the 22d August, gave orders for retiring across the mountains into the valley of the Guadiana, where he took up his cantonments in the end of August, the headquarters being at Badajoz. But the malaria of that pestilential district, in the autumnal months, soon produced the most deleterious effect on the health of the soldiers. The noxious vapours which exhaled from the beds of the rivers, joined to the cessation of active habits, and consequent circulation of the bilious secretion through the system, rendered fevers alarmingly frequent; seven thousand men were soon in hospital, of whom nearly two-thirds died, and the sands of the Guadiana proved more fatal to the army than the sword of the enemy.¹

¹ Wel. Desp. Gurw. v. 10, 11, 12, 22, 24, 33, 62, 67, 63, 69, 71. Nap. ii. 434, 446.

58, Success of the Spaniards at Tamames.

² Gurw. v. 345.

Being perfectly aware of the inability of the Spanish armies to contend with the French veterans, Wellington now earnestly counselled their leaders to adopt a different system of warfare; to avoid all general actions, encamp always in strong positions, and fortify them, when in the neighbourhood of the enemy; and make the best use of those numerous mountain chains which intersect the country in every direction, and afforded the means of avoiding the numerous and terrible imperial horse.² An

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example soon occurred of the beneficial effects which would have resulted from the general adoption of this system. Ney's corps, which had been delivered over to General Marchand, when that marshal himself returned into France, lay in the plains of Leon, near Ciudad Rodrigo ; and the army formerly commanded by the Marquis Romana, having at length emerged from the Galician mountains, and arrived in the same neighbourhood, the French general adopted the resolution of bringing it to action. After a variety of marches, the Duke del Parque, who had just been appointed to the command of the army, took post in the strong position of Tamanes, in the mountains on the northern side of the Puerto de Banos, where he was attacked, in the end of October, by Oct. 24. Marchand, with twelve thousand men. The French troops commenced the attack with all their wonted spirit, anticipating an easy victory, and at first gained considerable success. But the main body of the Spanish army, trained in the campaign of Galicia to a mountain warfare, falling back to their strong ground, made a vigorous resistance, and, from behind inaccessible rocks, showered down a murderous fire on the assailants. After a sharp conflict, the unusual spectacle was exhibited of the French eagles receding before the Spanish standards, and Marchand drew off with the loss of fifteen hundred men and one gun ; while the Duke del Parque gave decisive proof of the reality of his success, by advancing immediately after the action, and taking unresisted possession of Salamanca, with twenty-five thousand men.¹

¹Jom. iii.
358. Gurw.
v. 362. Nap.
iii. 65, 66.
Tor. iii.
134, 137.

This transient gleam of success, instead of inducing the Spaniards to persevere in the cautious policy to which it had been owing, and which Wellington had so strenuously recommended, inspired them with a presumptuous self-confidence which proved their total ruin. The success gained by the Duke del Parque at Tamanes, and the junction of his followers to those of Ballasteros, who had come down from Asturias with eight thousand fresh

59.
Events
which led
to the battle
of Ocana.

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Nov. 3.
¹ Tor. iii.
141. Nap.
iii. 79, 80.
Jom. ii.
359.60.
Position
taken up by
the Spanish
general
there.Atlas,
Plate 62.

Nov. 12.

² Nap. iii.
79, 80. Jom.
iii. 359, 360.
Tor. iii.
144. Vict.
et Cong.
xix. 302.

troops, gave such disquietude to the French, from their close proximity to their principal line of communication with Bayonne, that they deemed it necessary to withdraw part of Mortier's corps from Estremadura. This inspired the Central Junta with the hope that they might now undertake, with some prospect of success, their long-cherished project of recovering Madrid. Arizaga, accordingly, who had been appointed to the command of the army of Venegas, which, by great exertions, and the junction of the main body of Cuesta's force, had been raised to fifty thousand men, of whom seven thousand were cavalry, with sixty pieces of cannon, moved forward in the beginning of November from the foot of the Sierra Morena, and soon arrived in the plain of OCAÑA, where Milhaud lay with the advanced guard of Sebastiani's corps.¹

Encouraged by their great superiority of numbers, the Spanish horse fell with great vigour on the French division ; but Milhaud was at the head of those redoubtable cuirassiers who had appeared with glory in all the great battles of Europe since the accession of Napoleon ; and after a short encounter, he routed the enemy with severe loss, and contrived to keep his ground in front of Aranjuez and the Tagus, till the main body of the army came up to his assistance. In effect, Joseph soon arrived with part of the corps of Soult and Mortier, and the royal guards, which raised his force to thirty thousand men, of whom five thousand were horsemen and lancers, with fifty guns. The Spanish general, whose ignorance of war was equal to his presumption, now perceived his danger, and took post on the best ground within his reach to give battle ; but it was essentially defective, and its character proved one great cause of the unheard-of disaster which followed. The left wing, fifteen thousand strong, was placed *behind* a deep ravine, which it could not cross without falling into confusion ;² the centre was in advance of the town of Ocana, and the right *in front* of the same

ravine, which ran along the whole line ; so that the one wing was without a retreat in case of disaster, the other without the means of attacking the enemy in the event of success.

Totally unequal to such a crisis, Areizaga took post at break of day in one of the steeples of Ocana, behind his centre, where he remained during the whole battle, neither giving orders nor sending succour to any part of his line. Thus left to themselves, however, his troops at first made a gallant defence. Laval's division was the first which advanced to the attack, preceded by Senarmont's terrible battery of thirty guns, the effect of which had been so severely experienced by the Russians at Friedland. The Spanish troops in the centre and right, however, stood firm, and, with loud shouts, awaited the onset of the enemy ; while their guns in position there kept up a heavy and destructive cannonade upon the advancing columns. Such was the weight of their fire, that the leading ranks of their assailants hesitated and fell back. Soult and Mortier, perceiving the disorder, instantly hastened to the spot, and brought up Gerard's division ; and, opening their ranks to let the fugitives through, presented a front of fresh troops, in admirable order, to the combat. The prompt succour thus afforded restored the battle, and soon gave the French a glorious victory. The right wing of the Spaniards, severely pressed by Sebastiani's cavalry, and Laval and Gerard's divisions, was compelled to retreat behind the ravine, in front of which it stood at the commencement of the battle ; while the dense lines of the Spanish left, posted behind the impassable gully in their front, were compelled to remain inactive spectators of the rout, arising from the whole enemy's force being thrown on their centre and right.¹

The troops in the centre, which had repulsed Laval, were compelled by Dessolles' division, who now came up, to retire through the town of Ocana, where Areizaga was chased

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61.
Total defeat
of the
Spaniards.

¹ Gurw. v.
363. Nap.
iii. 80, 82.
Jom. iii.
359. Tor.
iii. 144, 146.

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LXII.1809.
62.Entire
wreck
of the
Spanish
army.

from his steeple, and instantly took to flight. On the right, Sebastiani, by penetrating between the town and the extreme Spanish right, cut off six thousand men, and obliged them to surrender. The line, now broken in every part, rushed in wild disorder towards the rear, followed by the terrible French dragoons, who soon drove ten thousand men into a space behind Ocana, having only one outlet behind, where the throng was soon so great, that escape was impossible, and almost the whole were made prisoners. The army, upon this, dispersed in all directions, while the French cavalry, spreading out from Ocana like a fan, thundered in pursuit over the wide and desolate plains which extend to the south towards the Sierra Morena. Twenty thousand prisoners, forty-five pieces of cannon, and the whole ammunition of the army, were the fruits of this glorious battle, which lasted only four hours, and in which the victors fired only seventeen hundred cannon-shot. Wearied with collecting prisoners, the French at length merely took their arms from the fugitives, desiring them to go home, telling them that war was a trade for which they were not fit; and such was the wreck of the army, which lately numbered fifty thousand combatants, that, ten days after the battle, Areizaga could not collect a single battalion to defend the passes of the Sierra Morena.¹

1. Jom. 359,
361. Well.
Desp. Gur.
v. 363. Nap.
iii. 80, 84.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
302, 304.
Tor. iii.
144, 146.

63.
Rout of the
Duke del
Parque at
Alba de
Tormes.

This astonishing victory would doubtless have been immediately followed by the passing of that celebrated range, and probably the total extinction of all regular resistance on the part of the Spaniards, had it not been that the position of the English army at Badajoz rendered it imprudent to enter those defiles, through which it might be difficult to retrace their steps in the event of a powerful force from Estremadura advancing to cut off the communication with Madrid. Joseph, therefore, highly elated with a victory which he hoped would at length put an end to the contest, returned with the greater part of his army in triumph to the capital, where his government was now

established on a solid basis. All the elements of resistance in New Castile being now destroyed, the whole revenue of the province was collected, and the administration conducted by the intrusive government. A similar catastrophe soon after gave them a like command over the population and the resources of Leon and Old Castile. In that province, the Duke del Parque, finding the force in his front considerably diminished by the collection of the French troops to oppose the incursion of Areizaga to Ocana, advanced towards Medina del Rio Seco, in order to assist in the general movement on the capital. He attacked a body of ten thousand French on the 23d of November, and gained considerable success. But, in two days after, the enemy was strongly reinforced by some of the troops who had combated at Ocana, and who immediately spread the news of that dreadful event, as much to the elevation of the one as to the depression of the other army. The Spanish general, upon this disastrous intelligence, immediately retreated ; but his troops were so extremely disheartened by this great defeat in the south, that on the following day, when Kellermann, with a body of horse, came up with the army near Alba de Tormes, the Spanish cavalry fled the moment the enemy appeared, without striking a blow. The infantry, however, stood firm and made a stout resistance, which enabled the Duke to effect his retreat without any considerable loss, notwithstanding the repeated charges of the French horse upon his flank. But such was the depressed state of the troops, that at daybreak on the following morning, when a French patrol entered the town in which they were lying, the entire Spanish army took to flight and separated in all directions, leaving their whole artillery, ammunition, and carriages of every sort, in the hands of the enemy. So complete was their dispersion, that for some days the Duke del Parque was left literally without an army.¹ But the Spanish troops, whose constancy in adversity was as worthy of admiration as their unsteady-

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Nov. 23.

Nov. 25.

¹ Nap. iii.
86, 89.
Vict. et
Conq. xix.
305, 308.
Tor. 147,
151. Well.
Desp. Gur.
v. 364.

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1809.

ness in the field was remarkable, again rallied round the standard of their chief, and in a fortnight the Duke, who had retired to the mountains to the south of Ciudad Rodrigo, again found himself at the head of twelve or fifteen thousand men, but for the most part unarmed, without cannon or ammunition, and literally famishing from want.

64.
Transfer of
the British
army to the
frontier of
Beira.

As these terrible blows had dispersed the only forces in the field which the Spaniards had, worthy of the name of armies ; and as the event had now clearly proved what he had long foreseen, not only that they were incapable of maintaining themselves in the field against the French, but that, by their inability to perform movements in presence of the enemy, they could not be relied upon to take part in any combined system of operations, Wellington perceived clearly that henceforth the protection of Portugal must form his main object, and that, if the deliverance of the Peninsula was ever to be effected, it must be by the forces which rested on the fulcrum of that kingdom. He wisely resolved, therefore, to move his army from the banks of the Guadiana, where it had already suffered so severely from the autumnal fevers, to the frontier of the province of Beira, where it might at once recover its health upon higher and hilly ground, guard the principal road to the Portuguese capital from the centre of Spain, and watch the formidable force, now nearly thirty-six thousand strong, which the French had collected in the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo. In the beginning of December, therefore, the English general, after having repaired to Seville, and concerted measures with the Junta there, moved his army to the neighbourhood of Almeida and the banks of the Agueda, leaving only a comparatively small force at Elvas and in the Alentejo, to co-operate with the Spaniards in Estremadura ; and at the same time commenced those formidable lines at Torres Vedras, and in front of Lisbon, which he had long contemplated,¹ and which at length perma-

¹ Wel. Desp. Gurw. v. 364, and Desp. 20th October 1809, v. 234, 240. Jom. iii. 363.

nently arrested the hitherto irresistible torrent of French conquest.

These movements closed the bloody and eventful campaign of 1809 in the Peninsula; and, certainly, never since the beginning of the world had a war occurred presenting more objects worthy of the admiration of the patriot, the study of the statesman, and the observation of the soldier. The sieges of Saragossa and Gerona, where forty thousand ill-disciplined troops, supported by the heroic inhabitants of these towns, had inflicted nearly as great a loss upon the French as the whole military force of Austria had done in the field of Wagram, had afforded memorable examples of what could be effected by the feelings of religious and patriotic duty, when brought into the conflict under circumstances where the usual advantages of discipline and prowess could not immediately decide the contest. On the other hand, the long train of disasters which the Spaniards had since incurred in every other quarter, terminating in the frightful catastrophe of Ocana, had demonstrated in equally striking colours the total inability of undisciplined troops, even when animated by the most ardent zeal in behalf of their independence, and the greatest possible advantages of a mountainous country, to withstand in the field the attacks of a powerful, disciplined, and well-directed enemy.

That the Spanish people were brave, was evident from the courage with which they withstood, and on many occasions repulsed, the first attacks of the French veterans; that they were hardy, was demonstrated by the privations which they underwent with unshaken constancy; that they were zealous in the cause of their country, was clear from the multitudes who in every quarter thronged to its standards; that they were enduring in adversity, was manifest from the unparalleled tenacity with which they maintained the contest, after reverses and under circumstances which would

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1809.

65.

Disastrous
state of the
Spanish
affairs at
this period.

66.

Reflections
on the causes
to which it
had been
owing.

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LXII.

1809.

have overwhelmed the resistance of any other people. Yet with all these admirable qualities, they had every where proved, in the end, unfortunate, and could not point to one single province rescued by their efforts from the grasp of the enemy. It was evident that the deliverance of Galicia and Asturias was to be ascribed, not to the arms of Romana and the mountaineers of those provinces, brave and indomitable as they were, but to the disciplined battalions of Wellington, which first, by depriving Soult's corps of all its equipments, compelled him to evacuate that province, and afterwards, by threatening Madrid, forced the French generals to concentrate all their forces for the defence of the capital. A memorable example to succeeding ages, both of the astonishing effects of patriotic ardour in supporting, when properly directed, the cause of national independence, and of the total inadequacy of mere popular efforts to effect national deliverance from serious dangers, if not directed by a strong government, and resting on the foundation of national forces, previously disciplined and prepared for the contest.

67.
Wellington's policy
in consequence.

It was a clear perception of these truths, joined to the comparatively small force which he had at his disposal, and the extraordinary difficulty of providing alike men and money in Great Britain for additional troops, which was the ruling principle in the campaigns of Wellington, that are to form so brilliant a part in the subsequent chapters of this history. With a force seldom exceeding thirty thousand British soldiers, and which could rarely bring, after the usual deductions, above twenty-five thousand into the field, and twenty thousand Portuguese, he had to maintain a contest with six French corps, the whole of which, if necessary, could be brought to bear against his army, and which could bring into the field, after amply providing for their rear and communications, at least one hundred and fifty thousand combatants. The Spanish armies at different periods during the

campaign that was past, had indeed been numerous, their officers daring, and many had been the reproaches cast upon the English general for at last declining to join in the rash operations which terminated in the overthrows of Ocana and Alba de Tormes. But it was now manifest to all the world that any such operation could have terminated in nothing but disaster, and that, if the English corps of twenty-four thousand men had advanced in the close of the year towards the Spanish capital, the consequence would have been, that the French generals would immediately have concentrated their whole forces against it, as they had done against Sir John Moore, and that, if it escaped destruction at all, it could only have been by a retreat as calamitous and destructive as that to Corunna. The undisciplined state of the Spanish armies rendered this a matter of certainty ; for they were incapable, in the field, of moving to attack the enemy without falling into confusion ; and any progress which their desultory bands might make in other provinces during such concentration of their troops, would only expose them to greater disasters upon the separation of the French forces after the destruction of the English army.

Immense as were the obstacles with which Wellington had to contend, in striving for the deliverance of the Peninsula with such allies, against such an overwhelming superiority of force, the difficulty became still greater from the different modes in which the respective armies carried on the war. The British, according to the established mode of civilised warfare, at least in modern times, maintained themselves chiefly from magazines in their rear ; and when they were obliged to depend upon the supplies of the provinces where the war was carried on, they paid for them just as they would have done in their own country. In consequence of this circumstance, and the distance to which their provisions had to be conveyed, the expense of carrying on war, with even a

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1809.

68.

Difficulties
with which
he had to
contend,
and differ-
ences be-
tween the
English and
French me-
thod of car-
rying on
war.

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1809.

comparatively inconsiderable force, on the Continent, was severely felt by the British government. Already the cost of even the small army which Wellington headed in Portugal, was about £230,000 a-month. The French, on the other hand, by reverting to the old Roman system of making war maintain war, not only felt no additional burden, but experienced the most sensible relief by their armies carrying on hostilities in foreign states. From the moment that his forces entered a hostile territory, it was a fundamental principle of Napoleon's that they should draw nothing from the French exchequer; and, while the people of Paris were amused with the flattering statements of the moderate expense at which their vast army was maintained, the fact was carefully concealed that the whole troops engaged in foreign service—that is, above two-thirds of the whole military establishment of the empire—were paid, fed, and lodged at the expense of the countries where hostilities were going forward, or the troops were quartered. To such a length was this system carried, that we have the authority of the Duke of Wellington for the assertion, that the cost of the pay and hospitals for the French army, in Spain alone, was greater than the sum stated in the budget for the year 1809, as the expense of the whole military establishment.¹

¹ Gurw. vi.
552.

69.
Effects of
these on
Wellington's mili-
tary policy.

These causes produced a total difference in the modes in which the generals of the two armies were obliged or enabled to carry on war. The English, paying for everything which they consumed, found their difficulties and expenses increase the farther they advanced from the coast; and, when they got into the interior of the Peninsula, any considerable failure in their supplies, or any blow struck by the enemy at their communications, threatened them with total ruin. The French, on the other hand, fearlessly plunged into the most desolate provinces, comparatively regardless of their flanks or rear; and, without magazines or communications of any kind, con-

trived to wrench from the inhabitants, by the terrors of military execution, ample supplies for a long period, in a country where a British regiment could not find subsistence for a single week. "The mode," says the Duke of Wellington, "in which they provide for their armies is this : they plunder everything they find in the country ; they force from the inhabitants, under pain of death, all that they have in their houses for the consumption of the year, without payment, and are indifferent respecting the consequences to the unfortunate people. Every article, whether of food or raiment, and every animal and vehicle of every description, is considered to belong of right and without payment to the French army ; and they require a communication with their rear, only for the purpose of conveying intelligence to and receiving orders from the Emperor."¹

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¹ Wel. Desp.
Gurw. vii.
283, 299.

It may readily be conceived what advantages an enemy acting on these principles must always possess over another conforming to the good old fashion of taking nothing but what they can pay for. So also will fraud or violence, if directed by talent or supported by power, almost always gain the ascendancy in the first instance in private life, over the unobtrusive efforts of honest industry. But the same moral law is applicable to both : mark the end of these things, alike to the private villain and the imperial robber. What the French military historians call the circumspection and caution of the British general, was the necessary result of those principles of justice and perseverance, which, commencing with the reverses of the Spanish campaign, were destined ere long to rouse mankind in their favour, and lead to the triumph of Vitoria and the Moscow retreat. The energy and fearlessness which they justly admire in their own generals, were the consequence of the system which, destroying the half of every army in the course of every campaign, was destined in the end to exhaust the military strength of the empire, and bring the

70.
And ultimate results
to the two
parties.

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71.
Rashness
and folly
of the
Spanish
rulers.

powers of Europe in irresistible force to the banks of the Seine.

Notwithstanding all these untoward circumstances, and the difficulties necessarily arising from the co-operation of the armies of three independent kingdoms in one campaign, Wellington, even after the retreat from Talavera, had no fears of the result, and repeatedly wrote, both to the British and the Spanish governments, that he had no doubt he should be able to deliver the Peninsula, if the Spanish generals would only adhere to the cautious system of policy which he so strongly inculcated.* Their course was perfectly clear. It was, to use the mattock and the spade more than the sword or the bayonet; to take advantage of the numerous mountain ranges which the country afforded to shelter their armies, and of the admirable courage of their citizens behind walls to defend their strongholds. In a word, they had nothing to do but to follow the course by which the Scots, on eleven different occasions, had baffled the English armies, numbering from fifty to eighty thousand combatants in each invasion, who had crossed the Tweed; and by which Washington, at every possible disadvantage, at length worked out the independence of the American States. But to this judicious system the ignorance and infatuation of the Central Junta, joined to the presumption and inexperience of their generals, opposed invincible obstacles. No disasters could convince them that they were not superior to the French troops in the open field; and so elated were they by the least success, that no sooner did they see the imperial armies receding before them, in any quarter, and in the most inconsider-

* "I declare, that if they had preserved their two armies, or even one of them, the cause was safe. The French could have sent no reinforcements which could have been of any use; time would have been gained; the state of affairs would have improved daily: all the chances were in our favour; and in the first moment of weakness, occasioned by any diversion on the Continent, or by the growing discontent of the French themselves with the war, the French armies must have been driven out of Spain."—WELL. *Despatches*, GURWOOD, v. 335.

able numbers, than, hurrying from their mountain fastnesses with a rabble almost undisciplined, and without even uniform, they rushed into conflict with the veterans against whom the armies of Austria and Russia had contended in vain. Nothing could be expected from such a system but the result which actually took place—namely, the total destruction of the Spanish armies, and the throwing the whole weight of the contest in future upon the British and Portuguese forces.

And, though the success which attended her efforts had not been proportioned to the magnitude of the exertions which she had made, yet England had no reason to feel ashamed of the part which she had taken in the contest. For the first time since the commencement of the war, she now appeared with troops in the field worthy of her mighty strength; and it affords a marvellous proof of the magnitude of the British resources, that this display should have been made in the seventeenth year of the war. The forces by land and sea which she put forth in this year were unparalleled. With a fleet of two hundred and forty ships of the line and nearly eleven hundred vessels of all sizes, she maintained the undisputed command of the waves; blockaded every hostile harbour in Europe; at once chased the Toulon squadron ashore at the mouth of the Rhone, burned the Brest fleet amidst the shallows of Basque Roads, drove the Russian navy under the cannon of Cronstadt, and still found thirty-seven ships of the line wherewith to aim a redoubtable blow at the fleet in the Scheldt. With a hundred thousand regular troops, she maintained her immense colonial empire in every part of the world, and, as it suited her convenience, rooted out the French flag from the last transmarine possessions of her foe: with one hundred and ninety thousand more, she swayed the sceptre of Hindostan, and kept in subjection her seventy millions of Asiatic subjects: with four hundred thousand regular and local

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72.
Vast efforts
of Great
Britain
during the
campaign.

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militia, she amply provided for the safety of the British islands ; while, with another hundred thousand gallant disposable soldiers, she carried on the war with unexampled vigour on the continent of Europe ; menaced at once Antwerp, Madrid, and Naples, and was prevented only by the dilatory conduct of her general from carrying off in triumph thirty ships of the line from the Scheldt, and by the failure of the Spanish authorities to provide supplies from chasing the usurper from his palace at Madrid. The Roman empire never had such forces on foot ; they exceeded those wielded by Napoleon in the zenith of his power. To say that the latter enterprises, in the end, miscarried and terminated in disappointment, is no real reproach to the national character. To command success is not always in the power of nations, any more than of individuals. Skill in war, as in pacific enterprise, is not to be attained except by experience. The best security for ultimate triumph is to be found in the spirit which can conceive, and the courage which can deserve it ; and the nation which, after such a contest, could make such exertions, if not in possession of the honours, was at least on the path to the fruits of victory.

73.
Comparison
with what
her forces
were at the
outset of the
war, and
have since
become.

Thirty years have now elapsed since this astonishing display of strength in the British empire took place ; and it is interesting to observe what, during that period, has been the change upon the national force, and the means of asserting the independence of the country, if again threatened by foreign aggression.* The intervening period has been one, it is well known, either of unprecedented triumphs or of unbroken tranquillity. Five years of successful combats brought the war to a glorious issue ; five-and-twenty years of subsequent uninterrupted peace have increased in an extraordinary degree

* Written in 1839. Since that time the dangers of this ruinous reduction of force have become apparent, and the regular army is now 117,000 men, exclusive of those stationed in India, about 20,000 more.—(June 1849.)

the wealth, population, and resources of the empire. The numbers of the people during that time have increased nearly a half ; the exports and imports have more than doubled ; the tonnage of the commercial navy has risen a half ; and agriculture, following the wants of the increased population of the empire, has advanced in a similar proportion. The warlike establishments of other states have undergone little or no diminution. France has nearly four hundred thousand men in arms ; Russia six hundred thousand, besides forty ships of the line constantly in commission, and ready for service. What, then, with such resources, and exposed to such dangers, is the establishment which Great Britain now maintains, when on the verge of a war in both hemispheres ?

Her army of three hundred thousand regular soldiers and militia has sunk down to ninety-six thousand men ; her fleet of two hundred and forty ships of the line has dwindled away to twenty in commission, fifty-eight in ordinary, and twelve building—in all, ninety ; her Indian army, which in 1826 numbered two hundred and ninety thousand, has declined to one hundred and eighty thousand combatants, while the population and extent of her Asiatic possessions are hourly on the increase ; her regular and local militia have entirely disappeared. All this has taken place, too, at a time when the wants and necessities of the empire in every quarter of the globe have rapidly augmented, and the resources of the state to maintain an adequate establishment are at least double what they were thirty years ago.* Nay, to such a length has the public mind become deluded, that it was lately seriously stated by an intelligent and upright Lord of the Admiralty, in his place in parliament, that “ it could not be said that Great Britain was defenceless, for that she had *three ships of the line and three guard-ships ready to protect the shores of England* :”¹ being just one-third of

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74.
Extraordinary decline in the warlike forces of England since the peace.

¹ See Sir C. Adam's Speech, March 8, 1839.

* This was written in 1839, and applied to the state of the national defences as they then existed.

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the force which Denmark possessed to protect the island of Zealand, when her fleets and arsenals were taken by Great Britain in 1807. There is not, perhaps, to be found so remarkable an instance of the decay of national strength, consequent upon prosperity, in the whole history of the world.*

"In the youth of a state," says Bacon, "arms do flourish; in the middle age of a state, learning; and then both of them together for a time: in the declining age of a state, *mechanical arts and merchandise*."¹ "If a

¹ Bacon's
Works, ii.
393.

* Tables exhibiting the resources, and military and naval establishments, of the British empire in 1792, 1809, and 1838:—

I. RESOURCES.

	Population of Great Britain and Ireland.	Exports. Official value.	Imports. Official value.	Tonnage. Great Britain and Ireland.	Revenue.
1792	12,680,000	L.24,904,850	L.19,659,358	1,540,145	L.19,258,814
1809	17,500,000	46,292,632	31,750,557	2,368,468	63,719,400
1838	26,450,000	105,170,549	61,268,320	2,785,387	47,333,000

—PORTER'S *Parl. Tables*; MARSHALL'S *Tables*; PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*; *Finance Accounts for 1838*, printed 27th March 1839.

II. MILITARY FORCES AND COLONIAL POPULATION TO DEFEND.

	Regulars.	Militia or Fencibles.	Volunteers or Local Militia.	Colonial Population to defend.	Colonial Army.	Total Military Forces.
1792	46,552	16,120	None	47,000,000	88,429	151,101
1809	210,000	84,000	320,000	73,000,000	185,504	799,504
1838	96,000	None	None	101,124,000	185,339	281,339

—MARTIN'S *Hist. Col.* i. 314 and 318, &c.; PORTER, ii. 221; *Ann. Reg.* 1792, 147; M'CULLOCH'S *Statistical Account of Great Britain*, ii. 438.

III. NAVAL FORCES.

	LINE.					FRIGATES.			Smaller vessels in all.	Total.		Grand Total.
	In Commission.		Ordinary.			In Com.	Ordr.	Build.	Sloops, Brigs, Etc.	Line.	Frigs.	
	Line.	Guard Ships.	Line.	Guard Ships.	Build- ing.							
•1792	26	3	87	25	12	52	57	6	149	153	109	411
1809	113	28	14	40	47	140	25	25	634	242	185	1061
1838	21	None	58	None	12	9	74	10	190	90	93	373

—JAMES'S *Naval History*, i. 404—Table 1; iv. 404—Table 1; BARROW'S *Life of Anson*, App. p. 424.

* This was the establishment of 1792, as measured by the Return of January 1, 1793. The war did not begin till the 8th February 1793, and the execution of Louis, which brought it on, took place on the 21st January 1793; so that this was the peace establishment.

monarchy," says Napoleon, "were made of granite, it would soon be reduced to powder by the political economists."¹ Are, then, the prognostics of these great men now about to be fulfilled? and is the British empire, the foundations of which were laid by her Edwards and Henries, and the maturity crowned by the genius of Shakspeare and Newton, the conquests of Nelson, and the triumphs of Wellington, to terminate at last in the selfishness of pleasure, or the timid spirit of mercantile opulence? Are the glories of the British name, the wonders of the British empire, to be overwhelmed in the growth of manufacturing wealth, and the short-sighted passion for commercial aggrandisement? Without pretending to decide on these important questions, the solution of which as yet lies buried in the womb of fate, it may safely be affirmed that the topic now alluded to affords deep subject for consideration, both for the British patriot at this time, and the philosophic observer in every future age of mankind. The moralist, who observes how rapidly in private life excessive prosperity saps the foundation of individual virtue, will perhaps be inclined to fear that a similar cause of corruption has, at the period of its greatest exaltation, blasted the strength of the British empire. The historian, who surveys the indelible traces which human affairs everywhere exhibit of the seeds of mortality, will probably be led to fear that the days of British greatness are numbered, and that, with the growth of the selfish passions springing out of long-continued and unbroken good fortune, the virtue to deserve, the spirit to defend it, is gradually wearing out of the realm.

But when the days of party strife have passed away, and the events of this time have been transferred into the records of history, all will probably concur in thinking that the immediate cause of this extraordinary decline is to be found in the long-continued and undue preponderance, since the peace, of the popular element of the

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75.

Probable
effects of
this change
on the
future for-
tunes of
England.

¹ *Las Cases*,
ii. 256.

CHAP.
LXII.1809.
76.

The main
cause of it
is to be
found in
the demo-
cratic pas-
sion for
economy.

constitution, and the extraordinary duration and violence of that passion for economical reduction which always springs from the ascendancy, for any considerable time, in the national councils, of the great body of mankind. It is not surprising that such limited views should be entertained by the popular party in Great Britain, when all the eloquence of Demosthenes failed in inducing the most intellectual democracy of antiquity to take any steps to ward off the imminent dangers arising from the ambition of Philip; and all the wisdom of Washington was unable to communicate to the greatest republic of modern times sufficient strength to prevent its capital being taken, and its arsenals pillaged, by a British division not three thousand five hundred strong. And, without joining in the outcry now directed against either of the administrations which have recently ruled the state, on account of a prostration of the national defences, of which it is easier to see the dangers than to provide the remedy, and in which all parties—save the few far-seeing patriots who had courage to resist the general delusion, and steadily opposed, amidst general obloquy, the excessive and disastrous reductions which were so loudly applauded—will probably be found to be nearly equally implicated, it is the duty of the historian to point out this memorable decline for the constant observation of future ages. Posterity will perhaps deduce from it the inference that present popularity is seldom the reward of real wisdom; that measures calculated for the benefit of future ages are hardly ever agreeable to the present; that national security, any more than national glory, is not to be purchased without present sacrifice; that the institutions which compel the rulers of the state to bend to the temporary inclinations of the people, in opposition to their ultimate interests, bear in themselves the seeds of mortality, and were the unobserved but certain cause of the destruction of the greatest power which had existed in the world since the fall of the Roman Empire.

CHAPTER LXIII.

CAMPAIGN OF TORRES VEDRAS.

THE result of the campaign of Wagram had elevated Napoleon to the highest point of greatness, in so far as it could be conferred by present strength and grandeur. Resistance seemed impossible against a power which had vanquished successively the armies of Prussia, Russia, and Austria, contest hopeless with a state which had emerged victorious from eighteen years of warfare. The conflict in the Peninsula, it was true, still lingered on; but disaster had everywhere attended the Spanish arms, and it only seemed to await the choice of the Emperor when the moment was to arrive that was to see their efforts finally subdued, and the French eagles planted in triumph on the towers of Lisbon. If the maritime war yet continued, it was only because England, with now seemingly unavailing obstinacy, maintained a hopeless contest; and, if she was still the mistress of the waves, that sterile supremacy had been attained by the sacrifice of all the objects for which the dominion of the earth had ever been coveted. More truly than in the time of the Roman emperors, the inhabitants of Albion were now severed from the civilised nations of the world, and the celebrated words of the poet—

“*Penitus divisos orbe Britannos,*”*

seemed, after the revolution of seventeen hundred years,

* “The Britons entirely separated from the rest of the world.”

CHAP.
LXIII.
1809.
1.
Greatness of
Napoleon's
situation
after the
battle of
Wagram.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1809.

2.
The want
which he
felt of histo-
ric descent.

again to present a faithful description of the situation of the British isles.

What, then, was wanting to a sovereign surrounded with such magnificence—to a chief wielding such awful power? Historic descent, and ancestral glory; and for this one defect, even all the achievements of Napoleon afforded no adequate compensation. In vain the orators of the empire dwelt with deserved emphasis on his marvellous exploits; in vain they pointed to Europe subdued by his arms, the world entranced by his glory. The present alone does not fascinate mankind; the splendour of existing greatness could not obliterate the recollection of departed virtue. Faintly at first, but still perceptibly, the grandeur of ancient days glimmered through the blaze of modern renown. As the whirl of the Revolution subsided, the exploits of the monarchy returned again to the recollection; the rapid fall of almost all dynasties recorded in history founded on individual greatness, recurred in painful clearness even to superficial observation; and in the next generation the claims to the throne, even of the heir of Napoleon's glory, might be overbalanced by those of an infant who had succeeded to the majestic inheritance of fourteen hundred years. The Emperor was too clear-sighted not to perceive these truths; the policy of his imperial government was calculated to revive the sway of those natural feelings in the breasts of the people. But it was difficult to make them stop at the desired point; and the danger was obvious, that the feeling of awe and veneration with which he endeavoured to inspire them towards the throne, might insensibly, in the next age, revive the ancient feelings and attachments of the monarchy.

3.
And of
heirs.

The necessity of having descendants to perpetuate his dynasty was apparent, and for this object he was prepared to sacrifice the dearest attachment of his existence. But he required heirs who might unite the lustre of former descent with the brightness of recent achievements, and

present on the throne an enduring example of that fusion of ancient grandeur with modern interests, which it was the object of all the institutions of the empire to effect. He succeeded in his wish: he exhibited to the astonished world the spectacle of a soldier of fortune from Corsica, winning at the sword's point a daughter of the Cæsars; the birth of a son seemed to realise all his hopes, and blend the imperial blood with the exploits of a greater than Charlemagne. And yet, such is the connexion, often indissoluble even in this world, between injustice and retribution, and such the mysterious manner in which Providence renders the actions of men the unconscious instruments of its will, that from this apparently auspicious event may be dated the commencement of his downfall. The birth of the King of Rome was coeval with the retreat of Massena from before the lines of Torres Vedras, the first occasion on which the imperial arms had permanently recoiled in continental warfare; and in the jealousy excited in the Russian cabinet by the preference given to the Austrian alliance, is to be found one of the main causes of his ruin. "That marriage," said Napoleon, "was the cause of my destruction; in contracting it, I placed my foot on an abyss covered over with flowers."¹*

CHAP.

LXIII.

1809.

¹ Las Cases,
ii. 108; and
iii. 131.

The Emperor had long meditated the divorce of the Empress, and his marriage with a princess who might afford him the hopes of a family. Not that he felt the unconcern so common with sovereigns in making this momentous separation. His union with Josephine had not been founded on reasons of state, or contracted with a view to political aggrandisement. It had been formed in youth, based on romantic attachment; it was

4.
Different
alliances
which were
the object of
his choice.

* "Πολλῶν ταμίᾳς Ζεὺς ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ,
Πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί·
Καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,
Τῶν δ' ἀδοκῆτων πόρον εὗρε θεός.
Τοιούτ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα."

EURIPIDES, *Medea*, 1415-19.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1809.

interwoven with all his fortunes, and associated with his most interesting recollections : and though impetuous in his desires, and by no means insensible on many occasions to the attractions of other women, his homage to them had been the momentary impulse of desire, without ever eradicating from his heart its genuine affection for the first object of his attachment. But all these feelings were subordinate with Napoleon to considerations of public necessity or reasons of state policy ; and though he suffered severely from the prospect of the separation, the anguish which he experienced was never permitted for an instant to make him swerve from the resolution he had adopted. The grandeur of his fortune, and the apparent solidity of his throne, gave him the choice of all the princesses of continental Europe ; and the affair was debated in the council of state as a mere matter of public expedience, without the slightest regard to private inclination, and still less to oppressed virtue.* For a moment an alliance with a native of France was the subject of consideration, but it was soon laid aside for very obvious reasons ; a princess of Saxony was also proposed, but this idea was rather recommended by the absence of any objections against, than the weight of any reason for its adoption. At length it was resolved to make advances to the courts both of St Petersburg and Vienna ; and, without committing the Emperor positively to either, to be determined by the march of events, and the manner in which the proposals were received,¹ from which of the two imperial

¹ Thib. vii.
99, 101.
Montg. vii.
4. Bign.
ix. 63, 66.

* Napoleon's ideas on this subject are the same as those so finely expressed by Corneille :—

“ Il repousse l'amour comme un lâche attentat
Dès qu'il veut prévaloir sur la raison d'état ;
Et son cœur, audessus de ces basses amorces,
Laisse à cette raison toujours toutes ses forces.
Quand l'amour avec elle a de quoi s'accorder,
Tout est beau, tout succède, on n'a qu'à demander :
Mais pour peu, qu'elle en soit, ou doive être alarmée.
Son feu qu'elle dédit doit tourner en fumée.”

Sophonisbe, Act iv. scène 3.

houses a partner for the throne of Napoleon was to be selected.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1809.

5.

Disclosure
of the reso-
lution for a
divorce to
Josephine
at Fontaine-
bleau.
Nov. 30.

It was at Fontainebleau, in November 1809, after the return of the Emperor from the battle of Wagram, that the heart-rending communication of this resolution was first made to the Empress. She had hastened to meet Napoleon after his return from that eventful campaign ; but, though received at first with kindness, she was not long of perceiving, from the restraint and embarrassment of his manner, and the separation studiously maintained between them, that the stroke which she had so long dreaded was about to fall upon her. After fifteen days of painful suspense and anxiety, the fatal resolution was communicated to her, on the 30th of November, by the Emperor himself. They dined together as usual, but neither spoke a word during the repast ; their eyes were averted as soon as they met ; but the countenance of both revealed the mortal anguish of their minds. When it was over, he dismissed his attendants, and, approaching the Empress with a trembling step, took her hand and laid it upon his heart :—"Josephine," said he, "my good Josephine, you know how I have loved you ; it is to you, to you alone, that I owe the few moments of happiness I have known in the world. Josephine, my destiny is more powerful than my will ; my dearest affections must yield to the interests of France."—"Say no more," cried the Empress ; "I expected this ; I understand, and feel for you ; but the stroke is not the less mortal." With these words she uttered piercing shrieks, and fell down in a swoon. Dr Corvisart was at hand to render assistance, and she was restored to a sense of her wretchedness in her own apartment. The Emperor came to see her in the evening ; but she could hardly bear the emotion occasioned by his appearance.¹ How memorable a proof of the equality with which happiness is bestowed on all classes of men, that Napoleon, at the summit of earthly grandeur, and when sated with every

¹ Bour. viii.
342, 344.
Mem. de
Joseph. i.
202, 209.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1809.

human felicity, confessed that the only moments of happiness he had known in life, had been derived from those affections which were common to him with all mankind, and was driven to a sacrifice of them which would not have been required from the meanest of his subjects!

6.
Speech of
the Emperor
on the occa-
sion of the
divorce.

Dec. 15.

A painful duty was now imposed on all those concerned in this exalted drama, that of assigning their motives, and playing their parts in its last stages, before the great audience of the world. And certainly, if on such occasions the speeches are generally composed for the actors, there never was one on which nobler sentiments were delivered. On the 15th of December, all the kings, princes, and princesses, members of the imperial family, with the great officers of the empire, being assembled in the Tuileries, the Emperor thus addressed them:—"The political interests of my monarchy, the wishes of my people, which have constantly guided my actions, require that I should leave behind me, to heirs of my love for my people, the throne on which Providence has placed me. For many years I have lost all hopes of having children by my beloved spouse the Empress Josephine; this it is which induces me to sacrifice the sweetest affections of my heart, to consider only the good of my subjects, and desire the dissolution of our marriage. Arrived at the age of forty years, I may indulge a reasonable hope of living long enough to rear, in the spirit of my own thoughts and disposition, the children with which it may please Providence to bless me. God knows what such a determination has cost my heart! but there is no sacrifice which is above my courage, when it is proved to be for the interests of France. Far from having any cause of complaint, I have nothing to say but in praise of the attachment and tenderness of my beloved wife. She has embellished fifteen years of my life; the remembrance of them will be for ever engraved on my heart.¹ She was crowned by my hand; she shall retain always the rank

¹ *Moniteur*,
Feb. 6,
1810. *Bign.*
ix.58, 59.

and title of empress : but, above all, let her never doubt my feelings, or regard me save as her best and dearest friend."

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LXIII.

1809.

Josephine replied, with a faltering voice and tears in her eyes, but in words worthy of the grandeur of the occasion. "I respond to all the sentiments of the Emperor in consenting to the dissolution of a marriage which henceforth is an obstacle to the happiness of France, by depriving it of the blessing of being one day governed by the descendants of that great man, evidently raised up by Providence to efface the evils of a terrible revolution, and restore the altar, the throne, and social order. But his marriage will in no respect change the sentiments of my heart ; the Emperor will ever find me his best friend. I know what this act, commanded by policy and exalted interests, has cost his heart : but we both glory in the sacrifices which we make to the good of our country : I feel elevated by giving the greatest proof of attachment and devotion that was ever given upon earth." "When my mother," said Eugene Beauharnais, "was crowned before the nation, by the hands of her august husband, she contracted the obligation to sacrifice her affections to the interests of France. She has discharged with courage and dignity that first of duties. Her heart has been often torn by beholding the soul of a man accustomed to master fortune, and to advance with a firm step in the prosecution of his great designs, exhausted by painful conflicts. The tears which this resolution has cost the Emperor suffice for my mother's glory. In the situation where she will be placed, she will not be a stranger to his wishes or his sentiments : and it will be with a satisfaction mingled with pride, that she will witness the felicity which her sacrifices have purchased for her country." But though they used this language in public, the members of the imperial family were far from feeling the same equanimity in private. They were all in the deepest affliction : Josephine was almost constantly

7.
Josephine's
dignified
answer.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1809.

Dec. 15.

¹ Goldsmith's
Recueil, iv.
746, 747.
Bign. ix. 58,
61. Mém.
de Josephine, ii.
205, 208.

wailing ; in vain she appealed to the Emperor, to the Pope, for protection ; and so violent and long-continued was her grief, and so abundant the tears which she shed, that for six months afterwards her eyesight was seriously impaired. The subsequent arrangements were rapidly completed ; and, on the same day, the marriage of the Emperor and Empress was dissolved by an act of the senate ; the jointure of the latter being fixed at two millions of francs, or £80,000 a-year, and Malmaison appointed as her place of residence.¹

8.

Proposals
made to the
Emperor
Alexander
for an alliance
with
his sister.

Though the divorce, however, was thus accomplished, yet it was by no means as yet determined, whether the honour of furnishing a successor to the throne should belong to the imperial family of Russia or Austria. Napoleon, without deciding in favour of either the one or the other, sounded in secret the disposition of both courts. His views had, in the first instance, been directed towards the Russian alliance ; and, on the 24th November, a week before he had even communicated his designs to Josephine, a letter in cipher had been despatched to Caulaincourt, the French ambassador at St Petersburg, enjoining him to open the project of a marriage with his sister to the Emperor Alexander in person ; requiring him, at the same time, to make inquiries when the young grand-duchess might become a mother, as in the existing state of affairs six months might make a material difference. Alexander replied to the French ambassador that the proposal was extremely agreeable to himself personally, and coincided entirely with his political views ; but that an imperial ukase, as well as the last will of his father, had left his sisters entirely at the disposal of his mother. “ Her ideas,” added he, “ are not always in unison with my wishes, nor with policy, nor even reason. When I spoke to the Emperor at Erfurth, of the anxious desire which all his friends had to see his dynasty established by heirs, he answered only vaguely ;² I thought that he did not enter into my ideas, and did nothing

Nov. 24.

Dec. 23.

² Bign. ix.
66. Thib.
viii. 101.

in consequence. Having not prepared the way, I cannot in consequence now answer you. If the affair depended on me, you should have my word before leaving this cabinet."

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LXIII.
1810.

At a subsequent interview, a few days after, the Emperor expressed his regret that Napoleon had not sooner expressed his intentions, and declared in favour of his elder sister, (since Duchess of Oldenburg,) who, both from talent, character, and age, would have been much more suitable than her younger sister, Anne Paulowna, who was now in question. In regard to her, he declared his intention of sounding his mother, without actually compromising the French Emperor. But these delays were little suitable to the ardent temper of Napoleon. He demanded, as soon as he was informed of these conversations, a categorical answer in the space of ten days. But this period was consumed in fruitless discussions with the Dowager-Empress, who alleged the extreme youth of the grand-duchess, who was only sixteen, the difference of their religion, and other reasons still more insignificant, such as, whether Napoleon was qualified to become a father. "A princess of Russia," said she, "is not to be wooed and won in a few days: two years hence it will be time enough to terminate such an affair." She concluded by demanding a Russian chapel and priests in the Tuileries, and a delay of a few months to improve the age, and overcome the scruples or timidity of the young princess.¹

9.
Difficulties with which they were met at the court of St Petersburg. Jan. 1, 1810.

Jan. 10.

¹ Bign. ix. 66, 72.
Thib. viii. 101, 104.

"To adjourn is to refuse," said Napoleon: "besides, I do not choose to have foreign priests in my palace, between my wife and myself." He instantly took his determination. Foreseeing that a refusal was likely to ensue, he resolved to prevent such a mortification by himself taking the initiative in breaking off the Russian negotiation. Before the expiry of the ten days even, fixed by Caulaincourt for the ultimatum of Russia, secret advances were made by Maret, minister of foreign affairs,

10.
Napoleon proposes to Marie Louise, and is accepted.

Jan. 26.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

Feb. 1.

Feb. 6.

Feb. 7.

Feb. 16.

March 11.

¹ Bign. ix.

66, 76.

Thib. viii.

101, 105.

to Prince Schwartzberg, the Austrian ambassador at Paris: the proposals were eagerly accepted. As soon as this was known, the question of a Russian or Austrian alliance was publicly mooted and debated in the council of state by the great officers of the empire, and, after a warm discussion, decided in favour of the latter, on a division. Napoleon professed himself determined entirely by the majority; and five days before the answer of Russia arrived, requesting delay, the decision of the cabinet of the Tuileries had been irrevocably taken in favour of the Austrian alliance. So rapidly were the preliminaries adjusted, that the marriage-contract was signed at Paris, on the model of that of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette, on the 7th, and at Vienna on the 16th February; and on the 11th March the marriage was celebrated at Vienna with great pomp—Berthier demanding the hand of the Archduchess Marie Louise, and the Archduke Charles standing proxy for the Austrian Emperor.¹

11.
Journey of
the Empress
Marie
Louise to
Paris.

On the day after the ceremony the new Empress set out from Vienna, and was received at Braunau, the frontier town of Austria, by the Queen of Naples. There she separated from her Austrian attendants, and continued her journey by slow stages, and surrounded with all the pomp of imperial splendour, and all the fatigue of etiquette, to the neighbourhood of Paris. Notwithstanding all the political advantages of the alliance, her departure was the occasion of great regret at Vienna. A large portion of the people openly murmured against the sacrifice of a daughter of Austria to the state necessities of the time; they regarded it as worse than the cession of the Illyrian provinces, more disgraceful than the abandonment of Hofer to the vengeance of the conqueror; and even the continuance of the war appeared preferable to the humiliating conditions by which it was thought peace had been obtained. In France, on the other hand, all the public authorities vied with each other in demonstra-

tions of loyalty and enthusiasm. The choicest flowers awaited her at every stage ; crowds of respectful spectators lined the streets of all the towns through which she passed : this great event was regarded as at once the final triumph, and closing the gulf of the Revolution, by winning for its victorious leader the daughter of the first family in Europe, and mingling the lustre of descent with the grandeur of a conqueror's throne. " She is not beautiful," said the Emperor, on a subsequent visit to Josephine, when he saw her miniature, " but she is the daughter of the Cæsars." These sonorous words more than compensated every deficiency ; the sinister presage, arising from the fate of Marie Antoinette, was forgotten, and the most intoxicating anticipations were formed of the consequences of this auspicious union.¹

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

¹ Thib. viii.
108. Bign.
ix. 79, 82.
Las Cases,
i. 330.

According to the programme of the etiquette to be observed on the occasion, the Emperor was to meet the Empress at Compiègne, and immediately return to Paris ; while she proceeded to St Cloud, where she was to remain till the marriage was celebrated. But the ardour of Napoleon broke through these formalities, and saved both parties the tedium of several days' expectation. After the example of Henry IV., when he went to Lyons to meet his bride, Marie de Medicis, on her journey from Italy, he had no sooner received intelligence of her approaching Compiègne, where he then was, than he went to meet her at the next post. As soon as she drove up, springing out of his carriage, he leaped into that of the Empress, without regard to the dampness of his clothes, which had become wet from a heavy rain that fell at the time, embraced her with more than youthful vehemence, and ordered the postilions to drive at the gallop to the palace of Compiègne. He had previously inquired of the legal authorities, whether, if a child were to be conceived without the formal marriage being celebrated, it would, if born after its conclusion by proxy, be legitimate ; and, being answered in the affirmative, he took this method

12.
Singular
breach of
etiquette
which took
place when
they met.

March 28.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

April 1.
April 2.

of cutting short all the fatiguing ceremonies of the occasion. The Empress was not a little surprised, though in secret perhaps flattered, at the unexpected ardour, as well as the youthful appearance, of her husband; and next day, it is affirmed, her attendants hardly knew their former mistress, so much had she improved in ease and affability from the establishment of her rank, and the society of the Emperor. The marriage was celebrated three days afterwards with extraordinary pomp at St Cloud on the 1st April: on the day following, the Emperor and Empress made their solemn entrance into Paris, amidst the roar of artillery, the clang of bells, and the acclamations of three hundred thousand spectators. They received the nuptial benediction at the Tuileries. Four queens held the train of Marie Louise: all the splendour of riches and all the brilliancy of arms were exhausted to give magnificence to the occasion. But though the *Moniteur* was filled for several months with congratulations on the event, and all the flowers of rhetoric and all the arts of adulation were exhausted in flattery, the people evinced no real enthusiasm after the spectacles were over; and in the multitude of gorgeous heralds, plumed pages, and arm-emblazoned carriages, which were everywhere to be seen, the few remaining republicans beheld the extinction of their last dreams of liberty and equality.¹

¹ *Moniteur*,
March 28,
April 3,
1810.
Thib. viii.
109, 120.
Bign. ix. 79,
86. *Las*
Cases, i.
330, 331.
Bausset, ii.
45, 46. *Cap.*
viii. 352.

13.

Pique of the
Emperor
Alexander
on the
occasion.

The hand of Napoleon, however, was too important an element in the balance of European power to be given away, without its occasioning deep mortification in the minds of those who deemed themselves slighted on the occasion; and it soon appeared to what incalculable consequences this marriage might ultimately lead. Alexander, though not particularly solicitous about the connexion, was yet piqued in no ordinary degree at the haste with which the Austrian alliance had been concluded, and in an especial manner mortified at the hand of his sister having been in effect discarded, while yet the pro-

posal for it was under consideration at St Petersburg. This feeling was so strong, that it was apparent even through all the congratulations of the imperial court, and all the practised dissimulation of the Emperor. "We are pleased with this event," said Romanzoff, the chancellor of the empire, to Caulaincourt; "we feel no envy at Austria; we have no cause of complaint against her; everything that secures her tranquillity and that of Europe cannot but be agreeable to us."—"Congratulate the Emperor," said Alexander, "on his choice. He wishes to have children: all France desire it: this alliance is for Austria and France a pledge of peace, and on that account I am enchanted at it. Nevertheless, it is fortunate that the objection of age so soon disposed of the affair. If I had not taken the precaution to speak to the Empress only in my own name, as of an event which by possibility might arise, what effect would now have been produced? Where should we now have been, if I had not scrupulously attended to her rights? What reproaches might I not have justly addressed to you? The delays of which you so much complained were therefore the result of prudence. Have you been equally considerate? Were you not conducting two negotiations at once? How was it possible that the marriage could have been concluded at Paris on the 9th February, almost before the arrival of the messenger from St Petersburg, despatched on the 21st January, after the lapse of the ten days allowed for our ultimatum, and who was the bearer only of a proposal for farther delay, to overcome the scruples of the empress and grand-duchess? If the difference of religion had been an insurmountable objection, you should have said so at first. It is beyond measure fortunate that the age of the grand-duchess could not be got over. In this instance, as when the same subject was talked of at Erfurth, it was your Emperor who spoke first; I only interfered in it as a friend.¹ Personally I may have some reason to complain,

¹ Bign. ix.
86, 90.
Hard. xi.
77, 78.

CHAP.
LXIII.

but I do not do so : I rejoice at whatever is for the good of France."

1810.

14.

Vast impor-
tance of
this resolu-
tion of
Napoleon.

When such was the language of the Emperor, it may be conceived what were the feelings at St Petersburg, and how materially the discontent of the court weakened the French influence, already so hateful to the nobles and the people. These details are not foreign to the dignity of history ; they are intimately blended with the greatest events which modern Europe has witnessed. For though governed in his conduct in general only by state policy, and a perfect master of dissimulation, Alexander was scrupulously attentive to his private honour ; the coldness between the two courts soon became apparent, and led to the most momentous consequences. For such is the weakness of human nature, alike in its most exalted as its humblest stations, that possibly political considerations might have failed to extricate the cabinet of St Petersburg from the fetters of Tilsit and Erfurth, if they had not been aided by private pique ; and Napoleon might have been still on the throne, if to the slavery of Europe, and the wrongs of the Emperor, had not been super-added, in the breast of the Czar, the wounded feelings of the man.¹

¹ Bign. ix.
86, 90.
Hard. xi.
77, 79.

15.

Character of
Josephine.

Few persons have undergone such varieties of fortune as Josephine, and fewer still have borne so well the ordeal both of prosperity and adversity. Born at first in the middle class of society, she was the wife of a respectable but obscure officer ; the Revolution afterwards threw her into a dungeon, where she was saved from the scaffold only by the fall of Robespierre. The hand of Napoleon made her successively the partner of every rank, from the general's staff to the Emperor's throne ; and the same connexion consigned her, at the very highest point of her elevation, to degradation and seclusion—the loss of her consequence, separation from her husband, the sacrifice of her affections. Stripped of her influence, cast down from her rank, wounded in her



Lehière

T. W. Harland.

THE HISTORY OF THE

feelings, the divorced Empress found the calamity, felt in any rank, of being childless, the envenomed dart which pierced her to the heart. It was no common character which could pass through such marvellous changes of fortune unmarked by any decided stain, unsullied by any tears of suffering. If, during the confusion of all moral ideas consequent on the first triumph of the Revolution, her reputation did not escape the breath of scandal; and if the favourite of Barras occasioned, even when the wife of Napoleon, some frightful fits of jealousy in her husband, she maintained an exemplary decorum when seated on the consular and imperial throne, and communicated a degree of elegance to the court of the Tuileries which could hardly have been expected, after the confusion of ranks and ruin of the old nobility which had preceded her elevation.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

Passionately fond of dress, and often blamably extravagant in that particular, she occasioned no small embarrassment to the treasury by her expenditure; but this weakness was forgiven in the recollection of its necessity to compensate the inequality of their years, in the amiable use which she made of her possessions, the grace of her manner, and the alacrity with which she was ever ready to exert her influence with her husband to plead the cause of suffering, or avert the punishment of innocence. Though little inclined to yield in general to female persuasion, Napoleon both loved and felt the sway of this amiable character; and often in his sternest fits he was weaned from violent measures by her exertions. Her influence over him was evinced in the most conclusive manner, by the ascendant which she maintained after their separation from each other. The divorce, and the marriage of Marie Louise produced no estrangement between them: in her retirement at Malmaison she was frequently visited and consulted by the Emperor; they corresponded to the last moment of her life;¹ and the fidelity with which she adhered to him in his misfortunes won the

16.
Her weaknesses.¹ Las Cases,
i. 330. Bour.
passim.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

17.
Character
of Marie
Louise.

esteem of his conquerors, as it must command the respect of all succeeding ages of the world.

Born in the highest rank, descended from the noblest ancestry, called to the most exalted destinies, the daughter of the Cæsars, the wife of Napoleon, the mother of his son, Marie Louise appeared to unite in her person all the grandeur and felicity of which human nature is susceptible. But her mind had received no lofty impress; her character was unworthy of the greatness of her fortune. She had the blood of Maria Theresa in her veins, but not her spirit in her soul. Her fair hair, blue eyes, and pleasing expression, bespoke the Gothic race; and the affability of her demeanour, and sweetness of her manner, at first produced a general prepossession in her favour. But she was adapted to the sunshine of prosperity only; the wind of adversity blew, and she sank before its breath. Young, amiable, prepossessing, she won the Emperor's affections by the *naïveté* and simplicity of her character; and he always said that she was innocence with all its sweetness, Josephine grace with all its charms. "All the attractions of art," he said, "were employed by the first Empress, with such skill that they were never perceived; all the charms of innocence displayed by the second, with such simplicity that their existence was never suspected." Both were benevolent, kind-hearted, affectionate; both, to the last hour of his life, retained the warm regard of the Emperor; and both possessed qualities worthy of his affection.¹

¹ Las Cases, i. 330; ii. 112.

18.

Her faults.

If her husband had lived and died on the imperial throne, few empresses would have left a more blameless reputation than Marie Louise. But she was unequal to the trials of the latter years of his life. If her dubious situation, the daughter of one Emperor, the wife of another, both leaders in the strife, might plead her excuse for not taking any decided part in favour of the national independence on the invasion of France, the misfortunes of her husband and son had claims upon her fidelity

which should never have been overlooked. The wife of the Emperor should never have permitted him to go into exile alone ; the mother of the King of Rome should never have forgotten to what destinies her son had been born. What an object would she, after such sacrifices, returning from St Helena after Napoleon's death, have formed in history ! Force may have prevented her from discharging that sacred duty ; but force did not compel her to appear at the Congress of Vienna, leaning on the arm of Wellington, nor oblige the widow of Napoleon to sink at last into the degraded wife of her own chamberlain.*

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1810.

Shortly after his marriage, the Emperor set out with his young bride for the Low Countries. They proceeded by St Quentin, Cambray, and Valenciennes, to Brussels, everywhere received with adulatory addresses, passing under triumphal arches, and entering cities amidst the roar of artillery. But other cares than the civil government of his dominions, other designs than the amusement of the young Empress, occupied the mind of the Emperor. The war with England still continued ; maritime preparations were necessary for its subjugation ; Antwerp was the centre of these preparations. It was from the Scheldt that the mortal stroke was to be dealt out. The first care of the Emperor, therefore, was to visit the citadel, fortifications, and vast naval preparations at this important point. An eighty-gun ship was launched in his presence, and one of the new forts erecting on the left bank of the river, beyond the Tête-de-Flandre, was called by the name of Marie Louise, which it still bears. He had every reason to be satisfied with the works in progress. Thirty ships of the line, nearly as great a fleet as that which was destroyed at Trafalgar, were ready for sea in the docks. From Antwerp the Emperor descended the Scheldt to Flushing and Middle-

19.
Journey of
the Emperor
and Em-
press to
Belgium.

* Marie Louise died, unpitied and almost forgotten, at Parma on the 20th December 1847.

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1810.

burg, where he gave directions for extensive works and fortifications, that were to do more than repair the devastations which had been committed by the English in the island of Walcheren. They afterwards returned by Ghent, Lisle, Calais, Boulogne, and Havre de Grace, to Paris, which they reached on the 1st of June. Napoleon there assisted in the interment of the body of Marshal Lannes at the Chapel of the Invalides at Paris. The direction of this journey, undertaken so shortly after his marriage, revealed the secret designs of the Emperor. Naval preparations, the conquest of England, were uppermost in his thoughts; and if any additional arguments were necessary to vindicate the destination given to the Walcheren expedition, it would be found in the direction he gave to this journey.¹

¹ Thib. viii.
124, 129.

20.
Dreadful
catastrophe
at Prince
Schwartzenberg's
ball.

July 6.

A deplorable event occurred shortly after, which recalled the recollection of the lamentable accident that had occurred on the occasion of the marriage of Marie Antoinette, and was regarded of sinister augury for the marriage of the young Empress. Prince Schwartzberg, the Austrian ambassador at Paris, gave a magnificent ball on the 6th of July, at which the Emperor and Empress and the whole court were assembled. From the great number of guests expected on the occasion, it was deemed necessary to enlarge the accommodations of his hotel. The large dancing-room was fitted up in the most sumptuous manner, in a temporary building behind, and the festoons and drapery, in particular, excited universal admiration. By accident, one of the gauze curtains took fire from a lamp in its vicinity, and the flames rapidly spread over the whole roof and interior of the structure. The coolness of Napoleon was as conspicuous here as in the field of battle; he immediately sought out the Empress, took her quietly by the arm, and led her out of danger. Many persons, however, were scorched by the flames, or wounded by the falling of the beams, and some of them died afterwards of these injuries. But

all lesser misfortunes were forgotten in the dreadful fate of the Princess Pauline of Schwartzenberg, the sister-in-law of the ambassador. This amiable person had been one of the last of the company who escaped from the burning room, with her daughter in her hand. Both had got out in safety ; but, in the confusion, the child was separated from her mother, and the latter, conceiving that she had been left behind in the scene of danger, rushed, with generous devotion, back again into the burning saloon, and was crushed by the falling of the beams. So fierce were the flames, that the place where the unfortunate princess had perished could only be discovered by a gold ornament she had worn on her arm, which resisted the conflagration. This frightful incident excited a deep sensation in Paris, chiefly from its being regarded as a prognostic connected with the marriage of the Empress. But history must assign it a higher character, and commemorate the fate of the Princess Schwartzenberg as one of the noblest instances of maternal heroism recorded in the annals of the world.¹

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1810.

¹ Bign. ix.
159. Thib.
viii. 128,
129.

This period was rendered remarkable by the fall of one of the ministers of Napoleon, who had hitherto exercised the most unbounded influence in the internal concerns of the empire. Fouché, whose talents for intrigue, and thorough acquaintance with the details both of Jacobin conspiracy and police administration, had hitherto rendered him a necessary part of the imperial administration, fell into disgrace. The immediate cause of his fall was the improper use and undue extension which he gave to a secret proposition at this time made to the British government, by Napoleon, for a general peace. The Dutch ambassador was the agent employed in this mysterious communication, and the proposals of Napoleon went to surrender to the English almost the entire government of the seas, provided that that power would abandon to him the uncontrolled sovereignty of the continent of Europe. In his secret conferences with the French agent

21.
Singular
intrigue
of Fouché.

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1810.
May 1810.

on this subject, the person employed by Marquis Wellesley insisted strongly on the prosperous condition of the British empire, and its ability to withstand a long period of future warfare from the resources which the monopoly of the trade of the world had thrown into its hands. These views singularly interested Napoleon, who had more than one agent employed in the transaction. This negotiation was discovered by Fouché, and either from an excusable desire to get to the bottom of the views of the British cabinet on the subject, or from an insatiable passion for intrigue, which could not allow any such transaction to go on without assuming its direction, he took it upon himself, without the knowledge or authority of the Emperor, to open a secret negotiation indirectly with Marquis Wellesley.¹ The agent employed in these mysterious communications was M. Ouvrard, a man of considerable skill in diplomatic negotiations, and whose vast monetary transactions had already produced such important effects in the early part of Napoleon's reign.²

¹ Fouché, i.
417, 418.
Bign. ix.
136. Thib.
viii. 130,
134.
² *Ante*, ch.
xlii. § 11.

22.
The intrigue
is discover-
ed.

Ouvrard repaired to Amsterdam, where he entered into communication with an Irishman of the name of Fagan, in London. Labouchère, an agent of the King of Holland, who had formerly been on a similar mission to the British government, was also employed in the transaction, and he communicated it to his sovereign Louis, by whom it was revealed to Napoleon at Antwerp. Ouvrard was in consequence arrested, immediately after Napoleon's return to Paris, and closely interrogated by the Emperor. It was proved from this examination, and from the documents found in his possession, that the basis of Fouché's propositions were, that the government of the continent of Europe should be surrendered to Napoleon, and that of all the transmarine states and the seas to England, with the exception of South America, which was to be made over to the French Emperor. In order to accomplish this double spoliation, a French army of forty thousand men was to be embarked on board an

English fleet, and charged with the reduction of North America to the government of Great Britain, and of South America to that of France. Extravagant as these propositions may appear, it is proved by a holograph note of Napoleon himself, that they had been made by the minister of police to the English government. "What was M. Ouvrard commissioned to do in England?" said Napoleon to Fouché, when examined before the council. "To ascertain," replied he, "the disposition of the new minister for foreign affairs in Great Britain, according to the views which I have had the honour of submitting to your majesty." "Thus, then," replied Napoleon, "you take upon yourself to make peace or war without my knowledge. Duke of Otranto, your head should fall upon the scaffold."¹

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1810.

¹ Note of
Nap. 8th
July 1810.
Mem. de
Fouché, i.
417, 418.
Thib. viii.
130, 135.

Upon consideration, however, Napoleon was inclined to adopt less rigorous measures. He was fearful of exhibiting to the world any instance of treachery in the imperial government, and perhaps not altogether at ease concerning the revelations which Fouché, if driven to extremities, might make regarding his own administration. He limited the punishment of the fallen minister, therefore, to deprivation of his office of minister of police, which was immediately bestowed on Savary, Duke of Rovigo.* To break his fall, Fouché was, in the first instance, declared governor of Rome, and he set out from Paris shortly after for that destination. But the recall of his appointment overtook him before he arrived at the Eternal City: he stopped short at Leghorn, and, in despair, took his place in a vessel with a view to seek for refuge in America. The sufferings he had undergone,

23.
Disgrace of
Fouché.

* The Emperor said to Savary, on appointing him minister of police, "I have put you in Fouché's place, because I found I could no longer rely upon him. He was taking precautions against me when I had no designs against him, and attempting to establish consideration for himself at my expense. He was constantly endeavouring to divine my intentions, in order to appear to lead me: and as I have become reserved towards him, he became the dupe of intrigues, and was often getting into scrapes. You will soon see that it was in that spirit that he undertook, without my knowledge, to make peace between France and England.—SAVARY, iv. 315.

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1810.

¹ Mem. de
Fouché, i.
417, 418;
ii. 13, 38.
Thib. viii.
130, 138.
Bign. ix.
136, 142.

however, from sea-sickness, in the outset of his passage, ultimately deterred him from carrying that intention into effect. He remained in Tuscany, determined to take his chance of Napoleon's vengeance, rather than incur the certain misery of a voyage across the Atlantic. He obtained, soon after, permission to return to Aix, in Provence, where he lived for some time in retirement. But at length the necessities of his situation obliged Napoleon again to have recourse to his assistance; and he took a prominent part in the subsequent course of events which ultimately brought about the overthrow of the empire.¹

24.
Rupture
with Louis
Bonaparte.

A still more important consequence resulted from the journey of Napoleon to the Low Countries, in the resignation of Louis, and the annexation of Holland and the Hanse Towns to the French empire. Napoleon had long been dissatisfied with his brother's government of the Dutch provinces; for that sovereign, sensible that his subjects' existence depended on their commerce, had done all in his power to soften the hardships of their situation, and had not enforced the imperial decrees against English trade with the rigour which the impatient disposition of the Emperor deemed necessary. The displeasure arising from this cause was much increased by the immense importations of English merchandise and colonial produce which took place into the north of Germany and the States of Holland, in consequence of the absence of the French guards from the coast during the campaign of Wagram and the Walcheren expedition; an importation so enormous, that, chiefly owing to its influence, the British exports, which in 1808 had been only £30,387,990, were raised in the succeeding year to £46,292,632.² Determined to put an end to such a state of matters, which he deemed entirely subversive of his continental policy, so far at least as Holland was concerned, as well as with a view to prepare the minds of the Dutch for the general incorporation which he meditated, Napoleon compelled

² Marshall's
Stat. Tab.
48; and
Porter, ii.
98.

Louis, by a treaty concluded in the middle of March, to cede to France his whole territories on the left bank of the Rhine, including the isles of Walcheren, South Beveland, Cadsand, and the adjacent territory on the continent to the left of that river, which was formed into a department under the name of that of the mouth of the Scheldt. At the same time, it was intimated to the King of Holland that he must relinquish all intercourse, direct or indirect, with England, and consent to his coast being entirely guarded by French soldiers.¹

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LXIII.

1810.
March 16.

¹ Treaty
with Louis,
Mart. v. 327.
Sup. Bign.
ix. 132, 133.
Thib. viii.
139.

This cession, however, was but the prelude to more important demands. During the Emperor's visit to Antwerp, he became more than ever convinced of the expedience of incorporating the whole of Holland with the French empire; and many letters, in the most haughty style, were written by him to the unfortunate King of Holland in the course of his journey back to Paris, evidently intended to make him in despair resign the crown. The last, from Lille, on the 16th May, concluded with these words:—"It is high time that I should know definitively whether you are determined to occasion the ruin of Holland: write no more to me in your accustomed phrases; for three years you have been constantly repeating them, and every successive day has proved their falsehood. This is the last letter in my life I shall ever write to you." Matters soon after came to a crisis: Oudinot, with a French army twenty thousand strong, crossed the frontier, and rapidly advanced towards Amsterdam. Louis, who had a thorough reliance on the affection of his Dutch subjects, who knew what mortifications he had undergone on their account, at first thought seriously of resistance; but upon the assurance of his generals that it was hopeless, he abandoned the attempt. It was next proposed to imitate the conduct of the prince-royal of Portugal, and fly to Java, as he had done to Brazil. But this project was relinquished as impracticable; and at length the unhappy monarch came to the determination of

25.
Incorporation of Holland with the French empire.

May 16.

July 1.

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LXIII.

1810.

July 9.
 1 Hard. xi.
 86, 90.
 Mart. Sup.
 v. 338.
 Thib. viii.
 137, 141.
 Bign. iv.
 189, 196.

resigning in favour of his son, the prince-royal, Napoleon Louis. Having executed this deed, he set out in the night from Haarlem for Töplitz in Bohemia, having first taken the precaution to order that the resignation should not be published till he had quitted the kingdom. The publication of this unexpected resolution excited universal consternation in Holland; but every one foresaw what soon after proved the denouement of the tragedy. On the 9th July, a decree appeared, incorporating the whole kingdom of Holland with the French empire.¹

26.
 Napoleon's
 public and
 private
 motives for
 this step.

“Obliged,” as the report preceding the decree set forth, “to make common cause with France, Holland bore the charges of such an association without experiencing any of its advantages. Its debt, fixed on so inconsiderable a territory, was above a fourth of that of the whole empire. Its taxes were triple what they were in France. In such a state of matters, the interest of Holland loudly called for its annexation to the Empire: nor was the interest of France less obvious in the transaction. To leave in foreign hands the mouths of the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Scheldt, would be to render the French commerce and manufactures tributary to the possessor of those estuaries. The present incorporation, on the other hand, completes the empire of Napoleon, and his system of war, policy, and commerce. It is a step necessary to the restoration of his marine; in fine, it is the most decisive stroke which he could deliver against England.” Louis protested against the measure as destructive alike of the interests of Holland and the rights of his son; and with much dignity refused the provision of two millions of francs a-year (£80,000) fixed on him by a supplemental decree of the senate in December following. Prince Louis, his son,* repaired to Paris, where he was kindly received by the Emperor, who had been much annoyed

Aug. 1.

Dec. 13.

* The same person who was subsequently imprisoned for several years at Ham by order of Louis Philippe, and afterwards was the first President of the French Republic.

by the scandal which this family rupture would occasion in the world. His words, at his first interview with his discrowned nephew, were as characteristic of his private feelings, as his public declaration on the subject was descriptive of the ruling principles of his policy. "Come, my son, I will be your father : you will lose nothing by the exchange. The conduct of your father has wounded my heart. When you are grown up, you will discharge his debt and your own. Never forget, in whatever position you may be placed by my policy and the interest of my empire, *that your first duties are towards me*, your second towards France ; all your other duties, even to the people whom I may confide to your care, must be postponed to these."¹

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LXIII.
1810.

¹ Bign. ix.
197, 199.
Thib. viii.
139, 146.
Mart. v.
338, 340.
Sup. Hard.
xi. 89, 90.

The resignation of Louis was the source of great distress to Napoleon, on which he forcibly enlarged even in the solitude of St Helena. But it was soon followed by an event which still more nearly affected him. For some years past, his brother Lucien and he had been on distant terms ; and he could ill brook the sturdy but honest feeling which induced that disinterested republican to refuse honours and royalty when bestowed by the imperial hand. Their rupture became irreconcilable by the refusal of Lucien to divorce his wife, an American by birth, to whom he was tenderly attached, in order to receive a princess suggested by the political views of the Emperor. He withdrew first to Rome, where he lived several years in privacy, devoted to poetry and the arts ; and when the Roman States were incorporated with the French empire, he resolved to take refuge in the United States, in order to be altogether beyond the reach of his brother's imperious temper. He set sail, accordingly, for America : but was taken prisoner by two English frigates, and conducted to Malta, from whence he obtained liberty to reside on his parole in the British dominions. He fixed his residence in the first instance at Ludlow in Shropshire, where he continued to devote his whole time

27.
Flight of
Lucien Bu-
naparte to
America.

March.

Aug. 5.

CHAP.
LXIII.1810.
Dec. 19.

to literary pursuits, and the completion of an epic poem on Charlemagne, which had long occupied his attention. Shortly after this voluntary expatriation, he purchased the villa of Thorngrove, near Worcester, where he lived in affluence and elegant retirement, till the conclusion of the war. About the same time letters were intercepted by the Spanish guerillas, from Joseph, in which he bitterly complained of the rigorous mandates which he received from the Emperor, and the perpetual mortifications to which he was exposed, and declared that if he could do so, he would willingly resign the crown, and retire to a private station.* Thus, while the Emperors of Russia and Austria, dazzled by the blaze of his military glory, were vying with each other for the honour of Napoleon's hand, his own brothers, whom he had raised from the dust to thrones, from a practical acquaintance with his tyrannical government, were seeking in preference the security of private life, and voluntarily took up their abode with his enemies, rather than incur any longer the vexations to which they were exposed from his imperious disposition.¹

¹ Thib. viii.
147, 148.28.
General
despon-
dence in
England at
the results
of the last
campaign.

The retreat of Wellington from Talavera, and the unsuccessful issue of the preceding campaign, excited the most desponding feelings in a large proportion of the inhabitants of Great Britain. The people of that country, although now strongly imbued with the military spirit, enthusiastic in support of the contest, and passionately desirous of warlike renown, were still mere novices in the military art. They were totally incapable of appreciating the merits of a system of defence which was to last for years, and in which ultimate success was to be pur-

* "I enclose an intercepted letter from Joseph to Napoleon, which seems to me to be as interesting a document as has yet appeared. It shows that he treats his brothers as tyrannically as he does other people, and gives ground to hope that his tyrannical temper will at no distant period deprive him of the advantages of the Austrian alliance."—WELLINGTON to LORD LIVERPOOL, 18th June 1811; GURWOOD, viii. 35.

chased by a cautious system of defensive policy, and frequent retirement before the enemy. They did not see that in the outset, and till the Peninsular troops had been trained to fight, and something approaching to equality of numbers in the field could be attained, such a system was not only expedient but unavoidable. Following the usual bent of popular bodies, to form their opinions from present impressions, the people never considered that a vast and admirably disciplined corps, like the French army, which had grown up with the victories of fifteen years, and was now drawn from the military strength of almost all Europe, could not be successfully resisted except by a steady perseverance at first in the most cautious policy; they forgot that it was by delay that Fabius restored the fortunes of Rome. Their idea of war was a victory followed by an immediate advance to the enemy's capital; and the moment that a retreat was commenced, they abandoned themselves to the most unmanly depression, and gave over all for lost, because the military power which had conquered all Europe was not at once crushed by twenty thousand English soldiers.

These feelings, characteristic in all ages of the great body of the people, who are usually governed by present occurrences, and incapable, when left to their own direction, of the steady foresight and sustained efforts indispensable in every department for durable success, were called forth with extraordinary violence in Great Britain in the beginning of 1810, by the unsuccessful result of the Walcheren expedition, and the successive retreats of Sir John Moore and Lord Wellington at the close of the preceding campaigns. In proportion to the unbounded hopes and expectations excited by the first brilliant success of the contest in the Peninsula, was the despondence which universally prevailed at the ultimate discomfiture of the English arms, the apparently unprofitable waste of British gallantry, and, above all, the innumerable defeats and disasters of the Spanish armies, which had

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1810.

29.
Address of
the city of
London for
an inquiry
into the con-
duct of Wel-
lington.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

Feb. 26.

¹ Parl. Deb.
xv. 600.
City of
London's
Petition.

30.
Extraordi-
nary expres-
sions in the
petition of
the common
council of
London.
Dec. 14,
1809.

now seemingly destroyed all hopes of successful resistance in the Peninsula. The Opposition, as usual, took advantage of these feelings to excite the people to such a manifestation of public opinion as might compel the termination of the war in the Peninsula, and ultimately hurl the ministers from office. The temper of the public mind at this period, and the feelings of the Opposition on the subject, may be judged of by the fact, that the common council of the city of London not merely petitioned parliament against the bill brought in by ministers for granting Lord Wellington an annuity of £2000 a-year, in consideration of the valour and skill he had displayed in the battle of Talavera, but prayed the King for "*an inquiry* into the circumstances connected with the failure of the late expedition into the interior of Spain." The expressions made use of on this occasion deserve to be recorded, as containing a memorable example of the well-known truth, that real greatness in public life has rarely been attained save by those who, at one period, have resolutely acted in opposition to the opinions and clamours of the great body of the people; and that not unfrequently the deeds of their life which have given them the most durable reputation with posterity, are those which have occasioned the most violent outcry and obloquy at the moment.¹

The common council stated, "admitting the valour of Lord Wellington, the petitioners can see no reason why any recompense should be bestowed on him for his military conduct. Profiting by no lessons of experience, regardless of the inference to be drawn from the disgraceful convention of Cintra, and calamitous retreat of Sir John Moore, a third army, well equipped, under the orders of Sir Arthur Wellesley, was precipitated into the interior of Spain, with the same ignorance of the force and movements of the enemy. After a useless display of British valour, and a frightful carnage, that army, like the preceding one, was compelled to seek its safety in a

precipitate flight, before an enemy who, we were told, had been conquered—abandoning many thousands of our wounded countrymen to the French. That calamity, like the others, had passed without any inquiry; and, as if their long-experienced impunity had put the servants of the crown above the reach of justice, ministers have actually gone the length of advising your majesty to confer honourable distinctions on a general who has *thus exhibited, with equal rashness and ostentation, nothing but a useless valour.*" This address having been offered to the King, is not to be found in the Parliamentary History or Annual Register, though a petition of a similar character was presented to parliament against the grant of Wellington's pension; but it was eagerly transcribed from the English daily papers into the columns of the *Moniteur*, where it remains among many other documents which their authors would now willingly consign to oblivion; but which history, looking to the encouragement of struggling virtue under unmerited obloquy in future times, deems it its first duty to bring prominently into light.¹

When such was the temper of the Opposition party throughout the kingdom, it may well be conceived that their leaders in parliament were not slow in taking advantage of a state of public opinion which promised such great results to themselves, and threatened such discomfiture to their antagonists. The preceding campaign in Spain, accordingly, was the subject of long and interesting debates in both houses of parliament; and the study of them is highly important, not merely as indicating the extent to which general delusion may prevail on the subject of the greatest events recorded in history, but as illustrative of the difficulties with which both Wellington and the government had to struggle in the further prosecution of the Peninsular contest. On the part of the Opposition it was strongly urged, on repeated occasions, by Lord Grenville, Lord Grey, Mr Ponsonby,

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Feb. 26,
1810.¹ *Moniteur*,
Jan. 20,
1810.See also city
of London's
Petition to
Commons.
Feb. 26,
1810.
Parl. Deb.
xv. 600.

31.

Argument
of the Op-
position
against Wel-
lington's
campaign,
and the con-
tinuance of
the war in
Spain.

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LXIII.

1810.

and Mr Whitbread, that "admitting it was proper to bestow rewards where great public services had been performed, it is difficult to see upon what ground the battle of Talavera can be considered as of that character. If a decisive overthrow has been achieved, such as that of Maida, it may be proper to confer such a distinction, even although no durable results follow from the laurels of victory ; but where that is not the case, and the contest has terminated in something like a drawn battle, it is reasonable to ask, when no subsequent advance has taken place, what evidence have we that a victory at all has been gained ? Now, what was the case at Talavera ? The enemy's army was neither dispersed nor overthrown, and, therefore, that test of success was wanting. Then what was the grand object of the campaign ? Unquestionably to advance with the aid of the Spanish armies to Madrid ; and, so far is that object from having been gained, that we ourselves were in the end obliged to abandon our sick and wounded, and retire with disgrace, first behind the Guadiana, and ultimately within the frontiers of Portugal. Nor was this all. By his disastrous retreat, Lord Wellington left the flanks of his army unsupported, and the consequence was, that Sir Robert Wilson, though a most able and gallant officer, was defeated on the one flank at Escalano ; and Venegas, with the best army that the Spaniards had, underwent a total overthrow at Ocana.

32.
Alleged bad
generalship
of Wellington.

" Granting to Lord Wellington the praise of being an able, active, and enterprising officer, his conduct at the battle of Talavera was not such as to entitle him to the character of a good general. It was clear that the strong ground on the left had not been adequately taken possession of or secured, and the charge of cavalry in the valley was injudicious, leading, as it did, to a very heavy loss, without any adequate advantage. If the Spaniards on the right were really the inefficient body of troops which his Lordship's despatches seemed to assert them to be,

what must have been the temerity of the general who, supported by such soldiers, advanced into the heart of the enemy's territory? If they were incapable of moving in the presence of the enemy, why did he leave to them the important duty of defending the post of Talavera and the British wounded? And if this was done because a still greater force, under Soult, threatened our rear and communications, on what principle can we defend the conduct of a general who could thus move so far into the enemy's country, without having done anything to secure his flank or rear; or how affirm that the dispositions of the inhabitants of the country are with us, when they gave no intelligence of the concentration and march of three French corps, and their approach to the theatre of war was for the first time made known by their threatening, and all but cutting off, our retreat to Portugal.

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1810.

“Such has been the effect of want of supplies and disease upon the British army after their retreat into Portugal, that hardly nine thousand men remained capable of bearing arms to defend the frontiers of that kingdom. This was a deplorable result to succeed immediately what, we were told, had been a glorious victory. There is something inconceivable in the difficulties alleged by the English general in regard to the providing supplies for his army. How was it that the French generals experienced no such difficulty? After the battles of Austerlitz, Aspern, and Wagram, their operations never were cramped by the want of provisions. How did this happen? Because they boldly pushed forward and seized the enemy's magazines. It argues a total want of organisation, foresight, and arrangement, to be thus checked in all our operations by the alleged difficulty of obtaining that which it is the first duty of every prudent general to provide for his soldiers. In fact, the French sent out small parties after their victories, and thus obtained supplies, while we were utterly

33.
And his
defective
system of
supply for
the army.

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1810.

34.
Ministers
said to be
the cause of
these dis-
asters.

unable to do anything of the kind after our alleged triumphs.

“Unhappily for the country, the same ministers who had already so disgracefully thrown away all the advantages of the Spanish war, are still in power; and they have learned no wisdom whatever from the failure of all their preceding efforts. It is now plain that they could no longer look either for co-operation, or efficient government, or even for the supplies necessary for their own troops in that country. Repeated disasters, unprecedented in history for their magnitude and importance, have at length taught us the value of the Spanish alliance, and the capability of that nation to maintain a war with France. They could not plead ignorance on this subject, for it was expressly stated in a letter of Mr Secretary Canning to Mr Frere, that ‘we had shed our best blood in their cause, unassisted by the Spanish government, or even by the good-will of the country through which we passed.’ When government determined, in opposition to all the dictates of prudence, to continue the war in the Peninsula, they took the most injudicious possible mode of carrying it on, by directing Lord Wellington to advance into Spain, if it could be done consistently with the interests of Portugal. By doing so we made the Spaniards abandon the system of guerilla warfare, in which they had uniformly been successful, and take up that of great battles, in which they had as uniformly been defeated. And when we did enter into war on that great scale, what have we done to support it? Why, we sent twenty-five thousand men under Wellington to Portugal, forty thousand to perish in the marshes of the Scheldt, and fifteen thousand to make a useless promenade along the coasts of Italy. These forces, if united together, would have formed a noble army of eighty thousand men, which would have effectually driven the French from the Peninsula. Instead of this, by straining at everything, we have gained nothing, and disgraced

ourselves in the eyes of the world, by putting forward immense forces which have in every quarter experienced defeat. If the war is to be conducted in this manner, better, far better, to retire from it at once, when it can be done without ruin to our own forces, than persist in a system of policy which has no tendency but to lure the Spaniards by the prospect of assistance from their true system of defensive warfare, and then leave them exposed, by our desertion, to the sad realities of defeat.”¹

CHAP.
LXIII.
1810.

¹ Parl. Deb.
xvi. 472,
504; xv.
140, 146,
458, 462.

On the other hand, it was answered by Lord Wellesley, Lord Liverpool, Lord Castlereagh, and Mr Perceval,—“The object of the British general was, first, to expel the invaders from Portugal; and next, to attempt the deliverance of the Spanish capital. The first object was attained by the passage of the Douro: an achievement as rapid and able as any recorded in military history, and which exposed the invading force to disasters fully equal to those which had been so loudly dwelt on as having been sustained in Sir John Moore’s retreat. When Wellington advanced into Spain, he had a fair prospect of success; and he neither could nor was entitled to anticipate the refusal of Cuesta to co-operate in the proposed attack on Victor, before Sebastiani and the King came up, which, if executed as he suggested, would unquestionably have led to a glorious and probably decisive overthrow. As to the merits of the battle itself, it is alike unfair and ungenerous to ascribe the whole credit to the troops, and allow nothing to the skill, resolution, and perseverance of the commander, who with half the enemy’s force achieved so memorable a triumph. Did no glory redound from such a victory to the British name? Has it not been acknowledged, even by the enemy, to have been the severest check which he had yet sustained? Is it to be reckoned as nothing, in national acquisitions, the striking a blow which gives a spirit to your soldiers that renders them wellnigh invincible? What territorial acquisitions followed the victories of

35.
Answer of
the Admin-
istration
in support
of the war.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

Cressy, Poitiers, or Azincourt ; and yet, can there be the least doubt that these glorious days have contributed more to the subsequent tranquillity of England, by the renown with which they have surrounded our name, than could have resulted from the permanent acquisition of vast provinces ?

36.
The immediate results
of the battle
of Talavera.

“ But, in truth, it is a total mistake to assert that no benefit to the common cause has accrued from the battle of Talavera. What else was it that arrested the course of French conquest in the Peninsula ; gave a breathing interval to the south to prepare fresh armies ; liberated Galicia and Asturias from their numerous oppressors ? What else prevented the invasion of Portugal, and gained time for the equipment, disciplining, and organising of the Portuguese forces ? It is in vain to suppose that an immense military force, like that of France in Spain, can be permanently arrested except by pitched battles and serious disasters ; and, accordingly, the consequence of the march of the English army to Talavera has been, that the French have been stopped in their incursions into every part of the Peninsula, and, instead of a vigorous offensive, have been driven to a cautious defensive in every quarter. It may be quite true that the advantages thus gained, and which were of such a magnitude as was, in the opinion of Lord Wellington, sufficient to have rendered the Spanish cause absolutely safe, had it been conducted with prudence and wisdom, may have been in a great measure thrown away, perhaps altogether lost, by the blamable imprudence and rashness with which they have subsequently rushed into conflict with the enemy in the open plain, and the dreadful overthrows which their inexperienced troops have consequently received. But neither Lord Wellington, nor ministers, are responsible for these consequences ; for not only were these subsequent efforts of the Spaniards undertaken without the concurrence of the British government or their general in Spain, but in direct

opposition to the most strenuous and earnest advice of both ; and, if the counsel given them had been adopted, the Spaniards would have possessed a powerful army of fifty thousand men to cover Andalusia, which would have rendered any attempt at the subjugation of that province hopeless, while the disciplined English and Portuguese armies retained a menacing position on the frontiers of Castile.

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LXIII.
1810.

“It is true that experience has now demonstrated, that very little reliance is to be placed on the Spanish army in the field, in pitched battles ; and, above all, that they are almost universally unfit to make movements in the presence of the enemy. This defect was anticipated, to a certain degree, from the outset ; although it cannot be denied that Lord Wellington, from the appearance and experience of Cuesta’s army, had good reason to be dissatisfied with the inefficiency of his troops during the short campaign in Estremadura. But it by no means follows from that deficiency, that it is now expedient to abandon the war in the Peninsula. If, indeed, it had appeared that the spirit of patriotism had begun to languish in the breasts of the Spaniards ; if mis-carriages, disasters, and defeats had broken their courage, or damped their ardour, then it might indeed be said that farther assistance to them was unavailing. But there is still life in Spain ; her patriotic heart still beats high. The perseverance with which her people have returned to the charge after repeated overthrows, reminds us of the deeds of their fathers in the days of Sertorius and the Moorish wars. The sieges of Saragossa and Gerona have emulated the noblest examples of ancient patriotism. The generous and exalted sentiments, therefore, which first prompted us to aid Spain, should still inspire us to continue that aid to the last. The contest in which she is engaged is not merely a Spanish struggle. The fate of England is inseparably blended with that of the Peninsula. Shall we not therefore stand by her to

37.
Unshaken
resolution
of the Spa-
niards.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

¹ Parl. Deb.
xvii. 472,
505; xvi.
131, 154.

² Parl. Deb.
xvii. 503.

38.
Reflections
on this
debate.

the last? As long as we maintain the war there, we avert it from our own shores. How often in nations—above all, how often in Spain—have the apparent symptoms of dissolution been the presages of new life—the harbingers of renovated vigour! Universal conquest, ever since the Revolution, has been the main object of France. Experience has proved that there are no means, however unprincipled—no efforts, however great, from which the government of that country will shrink, provided they tend to the destruction and overthrow of this country. How, then, is this tremendous power to be met, but by cherishing, wherever it is to be found, the spirit of resistance to its usurpation, and occupying the French armies as long as possible in the Peninsula, in order to gain time until the other powers of Europe may be induced to come forward in support of the freedom of the world.”¹ No division took place in the House of Commons on the conduct of the Peninsular war; but in the House of Lords ministers were supported by a majority of thirty-two—the numbers being sixty-five against thirty-three.²

In reviewing, with all the advantages of subsequent experience, the charges here advanced against government and Lord Wellington, it seems sufficiently clear that the only part of them that was really well founded, referred to the considerable British force which was uselessly wasted on the coast of Italy. That the Walcheren expedition was wisely directed to the mouth of the Scheldt, can be doubted by none who recollect that there was the vital point of the enemy’s preparations for our subjugation; that thirty ships of the line and immense naval stores were there already accumulated; and that Napoleon has himself told us he regarded Antwerp as of such importance to his empire, that he lost his crown rather than give it up. That success was easily attainable with the force employed, has already been sufficiently demonstrated from the opinions of all the French

military writers, and even that of Napoleon himself.¹ That the prosecution of the war in Spain was not merely expedient but necessary, must be evident to every rational person, from the consideration, that without our assistance the Peninsula would immediately have been subdued, the whole forces of Europe, from the North Cape to Gibraltar, arrayed against the British dominions, and that at least two hundred thousand French troops would have been ordered across the Pyrenees, to menace the independence of this country from the banks of the Scheldt and the heights of Boulogne. But it is impossible to allege any defence for the unprofitable display of British force on the shores of Italy. The expedition under Sir John Stuart was perfectly useless as a diversion in support of Austria, as it did not sail till the middle of June, at which time the whole forces of Napoleon were collected for the decisive struggle on the shores of the Danube. The ten thousand British troops thus wasted in this tardy and unavailing demonstration would probably have cast the balance in the nearly equipoised contest in the Spanish peninsula. Landed on the coast of Catalonia, they could have raised the siege of Gerona, and hurled St-Cyr back to Rousillon. United to the force of Wellington, they would have brought his standards in triumph to Madrid. But ignorance of the incalculable value of time in war, and of the necessity of concentrating their forces upon the vital point of attack, were the two grand defects which want of warlike experience had at that time impressed upon the British cabinet; and thus they sent Sir John Stuart to the coast of Italy, when it was too late to aid the Austrians, and kept him away from Spain, when he would have been in time to have materially benefited Wellington.

Severely as the government and Wellington were cramped by the violent clamour thus raised against the conduct of the war, both in parliament and throughout the country, one good and important effect resulted, which

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

¹ *Ante*, ch.
lx. § 13,
note.

CHAP.
LXIII.1810.
39.

Important
effect which
these
gloomy
views in
England
had on the
conduct of
the French
government.

was not at the time foreseen, and certainly was little intended by the authors of the outcry. This was the impression which was produced upon the French government and people, by the publication of these debates, as to the total inability of England to continue the struggle on the Continent with any prospect of success. The constant references in parliament, and in all public meetings, to the dreadful burdens which oppressed England from the continuance of the war, and the unbounded extent of the calamities which had befallen her armies in the last campaign, naturally inspired the belief, either that the contest would speedily be terminated by the complete destruction of the English forces, or that the British nation would interfere, and forcibly compel the government to abandon it. This opinion was adopted by Napoleon, who trusted to these passionate declamations as an index to the real feeling of Great Britain, and who, having never yet been brought into personal collision with the English troops, was ignorant alike of the profound sense of the necessity of resistance which animated the great body and best part of the people, and of the prowess which an admirable discipline and their own inherent valour had communicated to the soldiers. All the speeches on this subject in Britain were ostentatiously quoted in the *Moniteur*, and they compose at least a third of the columns of that curious record for the year 1810. The Emperor was thus led to regard the war in the Peninsula as a conflict which could at any time he pleased be brought to a conclusion, and which, while it continued, would act as a cancer that would wear out the whole strength of England. And to this impression, more perhaps than to anything else, is to be ascribed the simultaneous undertaking of the Russian and Spanish contests, which proved too great a strain upon the strength of his empire, and was the immediate cause of his ruin.

Having thus come to the resolution of continuing the

war with vigour in the Peninsula, government applied for, and obtained, the most ample supplies from parliament for its prosecution. The termination of the contest in every other quarter by the submission of Sweden to Russia, which will be immediately noticed, enabled them to concentrate the whole forces of the nation upon the struggle in Portugal, and thus to communicate a degree of vigour to it never before witnessed in British history. The supplies to the navy were £20,000,000, those to the army were above £21,000,000, besides £5,000,000 for the ordnance. No new taxes were imposed, although a loan to the amount of £8,000,000, besides a vote of credit to the extent of £3,000,000 more, was incurred. The land forces were kept up to the number of two hundred and ten thousand; and the ships in commission in the year were one hundred and seven of the line, besides six hundred and twenty frigates and smaller vessels. The British navy at that time consisted of two hundred and forty ships of the line, besides thirty-six building, and the total number of all classes was ten hundred and nineteen vessels. The produce of the permanent taxes for the year 1810 was £44,795,000, and the war taxes and loans £40,000,000. The total expenditure of the year rose to the enormous sum of £89,000,000.¹*

The decisive overthrow of Ocana having entirely destroyed the force of the Spanish army of the centre, and the Austrian alliance having relieved him of all disquietude in Germany, Napoleon deemed it high time to accomplish the entire subjugation of the Peninsula. With this view, he moved a large portion of the troops engaged in the campaign of Wagram, amounting to one hundred and twenty thousand men, across the Pyrenees, and arranged his forces in nine corps, besides the reserve on the Ebro, under the most renowned marshals of the empire. Twenty thousand of the Imperial Guard marched from Chartres and Orleans towards the Bidassoa;

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.
40.

Resolution
of parlia-
ment, and
supplies of
the year.

¹ James',
Naval His-
tory, v. 320,
Table xix.
Parl. Deb.
xvi. 1044.
Ann. Reg.
1811.
Chron. 310.

41.
Prepara-
tions of
Napoleon
for the cam-
paign in
Spain.

Atlas,
Plate 48.

* See Appendix, A, Chap. LXIII.

CHAP.
LXIII.
1810.

a large body of Polish and Italian troops assembled at Perpignan, and entered Catalonia; and an immense battering train of fifty heavy guns and nine hundred chariots took the road from Bayonne to Burgos. The Emperor even went so far as, in his discourse to the senate on 3d December, to announce his intention of immediately setting out for the south of the Pyrenees.* Such was the magnitude of these reinforcements, that they raised the total effective French force in Spain, which in the end of 1809 had sunk to two hundred and twenty-six thousand men, to no less than three hundred and sixty-six thousand, of whom two hundred and eighty thousand were present with the eagles, and fit for service. Out of this immense force he formed two great armies, each composed of three corps, destined for the great operations of the campaign. The first, comprising the corps of Victor, Sebastiani, and Mortier, with Dessolles' reserve, mustering about sixty-five thousand men, under the command of Soult, was destined for the immediate conquest of Andalusia; the second, under Massena, consisting of the corps of Reynier, Ney, and Junot, consisting of eighty thousand men, which assembled in the valley of the Tagus, was charged in the first instance with the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, and ultimately with the conquest of Portugal.¹

¹ Nap. iii.
101, 102.
Belm. i. 103.
Gurw. vi.
552.

Notwithstanding the enormous amount of these forces, the Emperor adhered rigidly to his system of making war support war: he reduced to 2,000,000 francs (£80,000) a month the sum to be transmitted from the imperial treasury for all his troops in the Peninsula, leaving the remaining funds for their support to be entirely drawn

* "When I shall show myself beyond the Pyrenees, *the Leopard in terror will plunge into the ocean to avoid shame, defeat, and death.* The triumph of my arms will be the victory of the genius of good over that of evil; of moderation, order, morality, over civil war, anarchy, and the destructive passions. My friendship and my protection will give, I trust, tranquillity and happiness to the people of Spain."—*Discourse of the EMPEROR to the Legislative Body, 3d December 1809; Moniteur, 3d Dec. 1809.*

from the provinces to the south of the Pyrenees, which were of course exposed to the most unheard-of spoliation. To such a length was this system of regular extortion carried, that separate military governments were formed in each of the provinces of Biscay, Navarre, Aragon, Catalonia, Old Castile, and Leon—the object of which was to render the whole resources of the country available for the clothing, feeding, and pay of the soldiers. And so completely did they intercept the revenue which should have been enjoyed by Joseph at Madrid, that he had literally nothing to depend upon but the customs collected at the gates of the capital. Yet with all this machinery to extract money from the people, and with this enormous army to collect it, the resources of the country were so thoroughly exhausted, and the ruin of industry was so universal, that the troops were generally in the greatest want; their pay was almost everywhere thirteen months in arrear; the ministers at Madrid were starving from the non-payment of their salaries; the King himself was without a shilling: and it was as much from the necessity of finding fresh fields of plunder, as from military or political views, that the simultaneous conquest of Andalusia and Portugal was attempted.¹

The Spanish government was in no condition to withstand so formidable an irruption. After the destruction of the army of the centre at Ocana, they had been unequal to the task of organising a fresh force capable of defending the defiles of the Sierra Morena against so vast a host. Areizaga, indeed, had contrived, even in the short time which had elapsed since that dreadful overthrow, to collect twenty-five thousand fugitives in those celebrated passes, who repaired to their standards after their former dispersion, with that extraordinary tenacity after defeat which has always formed so remarkable a feature in the Spanish character. But they were so completely dispirited and disorganised, as to be incapable of opposing any effective resistance. The Central Junta was in the

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

42.

Prodigious
extortions
and contri-
butions in
Spain by
which this
immense
force was
maintained.

¹ Belm. i.

103, 105.

Jom. iii.

407, 409.

Nap. iii.

101, 102.

Wel. Desp.

vi. 552.

Vict. et

Conq. xx.

4, 5.

43.

Prepara-
tions for
the invasion
of Andalu-
sia by the
French.

CHAP.

LXIII.

1810.

Jan. 5.

Jan. 9.

¹ Tor. iii.
165, 167.
Nap. iii.
102, 109.
Thib. viii.
256, 257.
Jom. iii.
409.

utmost state of debility, without either unity of purpose, vigour of counsel, or resolution of conduct. Destitute alike of money, consideration, or authority, it was utterly unable to stem the dreadful torrent which was about to burst upon Andalusia. The disaster of Ocana had called again into fearful activity all the passions of the people ; but misfortune had not taught wisdom, nor did danger inspire resolution. A decree was hastily passed to raise a hundred thousand men, which was followed a few days after by another, to distribute a hundred thousand poniards; Blake was recalled from Catalonia to command the army of Murcia; intrenchments were thrown up in the defiles of the mountains at a pass of vast strength, called the Despinas Perros, where Areizaga, with twenty-five thousand men, was stationed. Echevaria had eight thousand at Santa Elena, a little in the rear, and the Duke d'Albuquerque had fifteen thousand good troops behind the Guadiana in Estremadura. But the forces in the important defiles of the Sierra Morena, under Areizaga, were in such a disorderly state that no reliance could be placed upon them, even for defending the strongest mountain position; and if once driven from their ground, it was easy to foresee that their total dissolution was at hand.¹

44.
Forcing of
the passes of
the Sierra
Morena.

The French troops, during the first three weeks of January, collected in great force in the plains at the foot of the northern front of the Sierra Morena, under the nominal command of Joseph, but really directed by Marshal Soult; and on the 20th they put themselves in motion along the whole line, directing their masses chiefly against the defile of Despinas Perros, and the pass of Puerto del Rey, which were the only passes by which the passage could be effected. Hardly any resistance was made at either point. Dessolles carried the Puerto del Rey at the first charge, the troops who were defending it having retired precipitately, and dispersed at Navas de Tolosas, the scene of the desperate battle between the

Moors and Christians six centuries before. At the same time, Gazan's division mounted upon the right and left of the hills commanding the frightful gorge of the Despinas Perros, and soon drove the Spanish troops from the sides of the defile. No sooner was the road opened than Mortier poured through with his horse, foot, and cannon, in great strength, and united with Dessolles' division, who had carried the Puerto del Rey, that very night at Carolina, on the southern side of the mountains. Next day they passed over the field of Baylen, and arrived at Andujar. Meanwhile Sebastiani, with his division, forced, after some fighting, the pass of Villa Nueva de Los Infantes, and descended to the upper part of the valley of the Guadalquivir.¹

CHAP.
LXIII.1810.
Jan. 20.Jan. 21.
¹ Tor. iii.
174, 178.
Nap. iii.
114, 116.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
47, 48.

Having thus accomplished the passage of the mountains, which was the only obstacle that they feared, the French generals divided their forces. Sebastiani, with the left wing, advanced against Jaen and Granada; while Soult, with the corps of Mortier and Victor, moved upon Cordova and Seville. Both irruptions proved entirely successful. Sebastiani, with the left wing, soon made himself master of Jaen, with forty-six pieces of cannon; while Areizaga's army, posted in the neighbourhood, fled and dispersed upon the first appearance of the enemy, without any resistance. Pursuing his advantages with vigour, the French general entered Granada amidst the apparent acclamations of the people, and completely dissolved the elements of resistance in that province. At the same time Joseph, with the centre, advanced to Cordova, which was occupied without bloodshed; and, pushing on with little intermission, appeared before Seville on the 30th. All was confusion and dismay in that city. The working classes, with that ardent patriotism which often in a great crisis distinguishes the humbler ranks in society, and forms a striking contrast to the selfish timidity of their superiors, were enthusiastic in the national cause,

45.
Conquest of
Andalusia
and Gra-
nada.

Jan. 27.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

Jan. 31.

Feb. 5.
1 Tor. iii.
174, 182.
Nap. iii.
114, 118.
Thib. viii.
257, 260.
Jom. iii.
410, 412.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
47, 49.

46.
Rapid and
able march
of Albu-
querque.

Jan. 29.

and loudly called for arms and leaders to resist the enemy. But the higher ranks were irresolute and divided. The grandees, anxious only to secure their property or enjoy their possessions, had almost all sought refuge in Cadiz; and the junta, distracted by internal divisions, and stunned by the calamities which had befallen their country, had in a body taken to flight, and left the city without a government. Thus, although there were seven thousand troops in the town, and the people had every disposition to make the most vigorous resistance, there were no leaders to direct their efforts; and this noble city, with its foundery of cannon and immense arsenals, became an easy prey to the enemy. On the 31st Seville surrendered, and on the day following, Joseph entered that city in triumph. A few days afterwards, Milhaud, with the advanced guard of Sebastiani's corps, pushed on to Malaga. The armed inhabitants in that city made a brave but an equally ineffectual resistance. Nothing could withstand the impetuous charges of the French cuirassiers; and after sustaining a loss of five hundred killed, Malaga was taken with a hundred and twenty pieces of cannon, and a large quantity of stores of all sorts.¹

These rapid successes appeared to have put an end to the war in Andalusia; but at this critical juncture a bold and fortunate movement of the Duke d'Albuquerque saved Cadiz, and prolonged the contest in the southern parts of the Peninsula. In the end of January, several members of the Central Junta had straggled into that town in their flight from Seville, but so completely denuded of their authority and consideration, that they could be regarded as little better than private individuals. Feeling the necessity of resigning a power which they had exercised to so little purpose, they passed a decree, vesting the government, in the meanwhile, in a regency of six persons, and containing various important enactments for the convocation of the Cortes, which will be

the subject of consideration when the proceedings of that body are noticed in a subsequent chapter. Meanwhile, however, the danger was imminent, that this great city, the heart of the Spanish war, the seat of government, and of the whole remaining naval and military establishments of the south of Spain, would fall into the enemy's hands, in the interregnum between the cessation of the one and the establishment of another ruling power. The new regency was proclaimed on the 31st ; Jan. 31. but already a rival authority, self-constituted, under the name of the Junta of Cadiz, elected under the pressure of necessity on the flight of the Central Junta from Seville, and composed almost entirely of the mercantile class, exercised a power greater than the regency of the kingdom, and threatened to paralyse the public defence by the partition of the direction of affairs between two rival and conflicting authorities. From these dangers they were rescued by the vigour and resolution of Albuquerque. This able chief, perceiving at once, after the forcing of the Sierra Morena, that Seville was lost, and that the only chance for the kingdom was to save Cadiz, took upon himself, with true moral courage, the responsibility of disobeying his orders, which were to move to Almada, and support the Spanish left in the mountains there ; and, after disposing of half his forces by throwing them into Badajoz, he himself with the other half, consisting of eight thousand infantry and six hundred horse, set off by forced marches by Llerena and Guadalcanal for Cadiz.¹

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

¹ Tor. iii.
172. Belm.
i. 108. Nap.
iii. 116, 117.

The fate of Europe depended on him ; for, if the French had succeeded in making themselves masters of that city before his arrival there, and thereby extinguished the war in the south of Spain, there was hardly any chance that Wellington would have been able to maintain his ground against the united force of the armies of Soult and Massena in the mountains of Portugal. Everything depended on rapidity of movement,

^{47.}
Which saves
Cadiz.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

Feb. 3.

for the imperial generals were themselves equally alive to the vast importance of getting possession of the island of Leon; and the Spanish troops, when they arrived on the banks of the Guadalquivir, fell in with the French advanced posts pushing on for the same destination. But the latter, who had much the least ground to go over, were needlessly tardy in their movements: in ten days they only advanced a hundred miles: and by marching night and day with extraordinary rapidity, Albuquerque got first, and late on the evening of the 3d of February entered Cadiz from Xeres. He instantly broke down the bridge of Zuazo, over the canal at Santi Petri, which separates the Isle of Leon from the adjoining continent of Andalusia. It was full time, for hardly was this done when the advanced posts of Victor were seen on the side of Chiclana; and next morning the French battalions appeared in great strength on the opposite shores of the straits. The arrival of Albuquerque, however, diffused universal joy; and between the troops which he brought with him, the garrison of Cadiz, and the disbanded soldiers who flocked in from all quarters, his force was raised to fourteen thousand Spanish troops. The most urgent representations were made by the regency for assistance from Portugal: five thousand British and Portuguese soldiers were speedily despatched by Wellington, and arrived in safety at Cadiz. Confidence was soon restored, from the magnitude of the garrison, the firm countenance of the English soldiers, and the assistance of the British fleet in the bay; and the government at Cadiz, undismayed by the conquest of the whole of Spain, still presented, with heroic constancy, an undaunted front to the hostility of Napoleon, leading on the forces of the half of Europe.¹

Feb. 23.

¹ Tor. iii.

172, 173.

Lond. i. 445,

447. Belm.

i. 108, 109.

Jom. iii.

412, 414.

Nap. iii.

116, 119.

While these important events were extinguishing the war to the south of the Sierra Morena, save round the walls of Cadiz, circumstances of considerable importance,

and extremely detrimental in the end to the Spanish cause, were occurring in Aragon and Catalonia. In the first of these provinces, Suchet, having received considerable reinforcements from France, undertook an expedition against Valencia at the same time that Joseph was engaged in his grand enterprise in Andalusia. His army advanced in two columns; and as the Spaniards had no forces capable of withstanding him in the field, he arrived without resistance under the walls of Valencia. He had come unprovided with heavy artillery, and in the hope that the inhabitants, intimidated by the fall of Seville and the conquest of Andalusia, would hasten to make their submission to the conqueror. In fact, he had already entered into correspondence with several persons of consideration in the city, who had promised to surrender it on the first summons. But the plot was discovered; the leaders were arrested, and one of them was executed; and the government of the city being in the hands of determined patriots, all proposals for a surrender were sternly rejected. Meanwhile the guerillas, who had wisely avoided an encounter with the French troops in the field, collected in great numbers round their flanks and rear, cut off their supplies, and straitened their communications to such a degree that the general, after remaining five days before the town, in expectation of a capitulation, was obliged to retrace his steps, not without danger, to Saragossa, which he reached on the 17th of March. This check proved very prejudicial to the French interests in the east of Spain, and almost counterbalanced, in its effect upon the population of Aragon and Catalonia, the fall of Seville and conquest of Andalusia; for the Spaniards were, beyond any other people in Europe, regardless of the events of the war, and were elevated or depressed, not in proportion to its general aspect upon the whole, but according to the aspect of events in the provinces with which they were immediately connected.¹

CHAP.
LXIII.1810.
48.Operations
in Catalo-
nia. Suchet's
failure
before
Valencia.

March 3.

March 17.

¹ Tor. ii.
214, 217.
Nap. iii.
127, 129.
Thib. iii.
272, 273.
Suchet, i.
94, 105.

CHAP.
LXIII.1810.
49.

Fall of Hostalrich, the garrison of which cuts its way through the besiegers.

Feb. 20.

May 12.

1 Tor. iii.
220, 224.
Nap. iii.
133, 143.
Belm. i. 118,
119. Vict.
et Conq. xx.
37, 55.

This check before Valencia was not the only one which the armies of Napoleon experienced at this period in this quarter of the Peninsula. Ever since the reduction of Gerona, the arms of Augereau had been unsuccessful in Catalonia; and Napoleon complained, with some appearance of justice, that the great force which he had accumulated in that quarter, and which was now not less than fifty thousand men, had produced no result at all commensurate to the efforts which had been made to equip and augment it. The Spanish general, Campoverde, in the absence of Augereau, who had gone to Barcelona, attacked and destroyed a detachment of six hundred men, which had been placed at Santa Perpetua to keep up the communication between that fortress and Hostalrich. But this success, which gave extraordinary encouragement to the Catalonians, was balanced by a defeat which O'Donnell received in the neighbourhood of Vich in the middle of February, when the Spanish loss amounted to three thousand men. In consequence of this disaster, the Spaniards were obliged to take shelter under the cannon of Tarragona; and Hostalrich, which had been blockaded for two months, was closely beset, and at length reduced to the last extremity from the want of provisions. The brave governor, Estrada, however, who had borne every privation with heroic constancy, disdained to submit even in that extremity, and, at midnight on the 12th of May, sallied forth to cut his way, sword in hand, through the blockading force; and although he himself fell, with three hundred men, into the hands of the enemy, the remainder, to the number of eight hundred, got clear off, and, embarking in vessels sent to receive them, joined their countrymen in Tarragona. The possession of Hostalrich, however, was of great importance to the French, as, having got possession now both of it and Gerona, they were masters of the great road from Rousillon to Barcelona.¹

The return of Suchet from Valencia, and the arrival of Marshal Macdonald with considerable reinforcements from France, soon restored the French ascendancy in Catalonia. The former general resolved to take advantage of these favourable circumstances to undertake the siege of Lerida, a fortress situated between the mountains of Aragon and Catalonia, and which in ancient times had been the scene of the memorable combat between Cæsar, and Afranius and Petreius, the lieutenants of Pompey. The garrison of this fortress consisted of nine thousand men, and the governor, when summoned to surrender, at first made a gallant reply, stating, that "Lerida had never looked to anything but its own ramparts for defence." But the vigour of his resistance was by no means in proportion to these professions. The investment was effected in the beginning of April, and the operations were conducted with such vigour, that this celebrated place, which had twice in previous wars repelled its assailants, made a much less respectable defence than might have been expected. Its importance, however, induced the Catalonians to make the utmost efforts for its relief. O'Donnell, who commanded the Spanish forces in the province, collected eight thousand chosen infantry, and six hundred horse, with which he approached its walls; and on the 23d of April drew near to the French outposts round the town. They were at first driven in; but the Spaniards being quickly assailed by General Boussard with two regiments of cuirassiers, the whole were thrown into confusion, and totally defeated, with the loss of three guns, a thousand killed, and five thousand prisoners.¹

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50.Siege of
Lerida, and
action at
Margalef.

April 23.

¹ Nap. iii.
146, 148.
Tor. iii. 226.
Vict. et
Cong. xx.
26, 29.

This disaster enabled Suchet to commence his operations in form before the fortress, and the breaching batteries opened with great force against the rampart on the 12th of May. The fire soon made three practicable breaches, and at night the besiegers took the outwork of

51.
Fall of
Lerida.

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Fort Garden. Next day the assault took place at all the breaches ; and although the Spanish fire at the first was so violent that the heads of the French attacking columns staggered, yet at length the vigour of the assailants prevailed over the resolution of the besieged, and the storming bands made their way through in all quarters. And now commenced a scene of horror almost unparalleled even in the bloody annals of the Peninsular war. Suchet directed his troops, by a concentric movement, to drive the citizens of every age and sex towards the high ground on which the citadel stood ; and the helpless multitude of men, women, and children were gradually forced into the narrow space occupied by that stronghold. In the general confusion the governor was unable to prevent their entrance ; nor was it possible, perhaps, for any resolution to drive back a helpless multitude of women and children upon the bayonets of the enemy. No sooner, however, were they shut in, than the French general directed a powerful fire of howitzers and bombs upon the crowded citadel, which was kept up with extraordinary vigour during the whole night and succeeding day.¹

¹ Suchet, i.
106, 130.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
25, 34.
Nap. iii.
143. Tor.
iii. 226, 227.

52.
Atrocious
cruelty by
which the
citadel was
taken.
May 14.

These projectiles, thrown in amongst a wretched multitude of men, women, and children, for whom it was impossible to provide either shelter or covering, produced such a tragic effect, and spread such unutterable wo in the narrow space, that the firmness of the Spanish officers yielded under the trial. At noon next day, Garcia Conde, the governor, hoisted the white flag, and the garrison surrendered, to the number of above seven thousand men, with a hundred and thirty pieces of cannon, and vast stores of ammunition and provisions. The sudden fall of this celebrated fortress gave rise at the time to strong suspicions of treachery on the part of the governor ; but they seem to have been unfounded, and the capture of the citadel is sufficiently explained by the diabolical device adopted by Suchet—a refinement

of cruelty which, as Colonel Napier justly observes, is not authorised by the laws of civilised war, and which, though attended, as the excesses of wickedness often are, by success in the outset, did not fail to produce disastrous results to the French arms in the end, and contributed, in conjunction with the atrocious cruelty of Augereau, who hung peasants taken in arms on great gibbets erected on the road-side all the way from Gerona to Figueras, to exasperate the feelings of the people, and prolong the war in that province long after the period when, under a more humane system, it might have been terminated.¹

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¹ Suchet, i.
106, 149.
Vict. et
Cong. xx.
25, 32, 54.
Nap. iii.
144, 157.
Tor. iii. 226,
228.

Taking advantage of the consternation produced by this frightful catastrophe, Suchet immediately proceeded against the castle of Mequinenza, a fortress situated upon the top of a steep rock, seven hundred feet high, lying at the confluence of the rivers Cinca and Ebro. The difficulty of carrying on operations against a stronghold situated upon such a height, and the extreme hardness of the rock in which the trenches were to be made, were insufficient to arrest the unwearied activity of the French general. The engineer officers had reported that the siege was altogether impracticable, but he nevertheless resolved to attempt it, and by the vigour of his operations speedily overcame every difficulty. The investment of the fort was effected on the 19th of May. During the next fortnight a road practicable for artillery was, with incredible labour, cut through the rocks of the neighbouring mountains, for the distance of above two miles; and at length the breaching batteries were established within three hundred yards of the place, on the night of the 1st of June. The approaches were blown out of the solid rock by the indefatigable perseverance of the French sappers and miners, and on the night of the 4th of June the town was carried by escalade. This advantage cut off the garrison from all chance of escaping by the Ebro, to which they before

53.
Fall of Me-
quinenza.

June 1.

June 4.

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June 8.
 1 Suchet, i.
 157, 170.
 Tor. iii. 228,
 230.

had access. The breaching batteries were now advanced close to the castle walls, and the fire was kept up with extraordinary vigour on both sides until the morning of the 8th, when a great part of the rampart having fallen down, and left a wide aperture, the garrison surrendered, with forty-five guns and two thousand men.¹

54.
 Disasters of
 Augereau in
 Catalonia,
 and his re-
 call.

At the same time Napoleon, who had been extremely displeased with Augereau for retiring during the siege of Lerida from the position which had been assigned to him to cover the besieging forces, and for having, by retreating to Barcelona, exposed Suchet's corps to the attack which it sustained from the enterprising O'Donnell, recalled him from Spain, and he was succeeded by Marshal Macdonald, who conducted the war in Catalonia both with more judgment and less ferocity. Such had been the incapacity of Augereau in the latter months of his command, that he not only failed in his great object of covering the siege of Lerida, but exposed his troops, by dispersing them in small bodies in different stations, to be cut up in detail by the indefatigable activity and skilful rapidity of General O'Donnell. This able chief, with the remains of the army which only a few weeks before had been routed at Vich, surprised and put to the sword a battalion in Villafranca, cut off nearly a whole brigade, under Schwartz, at Manresa; and so straitened the enemy for provisions, as to compel Augereau himself, though at the head of nearly twenty thousand men, to take refuge in Gerona, with the loss of above three thousand men. It is impossible, in contemplating the vigorous efforts thus made by the Spaniards in Catalonia, and the heroic courage with which they maintained the war against every disadvantage, and deeply dyed almost every French triumph with disaster, not to feel the most poignant regret at the want of military discernment in the British government, which detained at this critical period ten thousand English troops,² amply sufficient to have cast the

² Tor. iii.
 228, 231.
 Vict. et.
 Conq. xx.
 46, 55. Nap.
 iii. 161, 166.
 Suchet, i.
 151, 170.

balance, even against the skill and energy of Suchet, in useless inactivity on the shores of Sicily.

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While Andalusia was thus at once prostrated before the enemy, and the balance on the eastern coast of Spain, notwithstanding a more resolute resistance, was inclining slowly, but sensibly, in favour of the French arms, Wellington was steadily laying the foundations of that invincible defence of Portugal which has justly rendered his name immortal. The result of the short campaign of Talavera had completely demonstrated to him that no reliance could be placed on the co-operation in the field of the Spanish armies; and that, although the aid of their desultory forces was by no means to be despised, yet it would be much more efficacious when they were left to pursue the war in their own way, and the existence of the English army was not endangered by the concentration of the whole disposable resources of the enemy, to repel any regular invasion of Spain by their forces. He saw clearly that the Spanish government, partly from the occupation of so large a portion of their territory by the enemy, and the consequent destruction of almost all their revenue, partly from the incapacity, presumption, and ignorance of the members of administration and generals of the army, was totally incapable of either directing, feeding, or paying their troops; and, consequently, that their armed bands could be regarded as little better than patriotic robbers, who exacted alike from friends and foes the supplies requisite for their support.¹

55.
Wellington's views on the incapacity of the Spaniards.

¹ Gurw. vi. 47; viii. 89; and v. 234.

Wisely resolving, therefore, to put no reliance on their assistance, he determined to organise in Portugal the means of the most strenuous resistance to the enemy, and to equip in that kingdom a body of men who, being raised by the efforts of English officers to the rank of real soldiers, might, with the aid of the British army, and by the assistance of the powerful means of defence

56.
His plan for the defence of Portugal, and the ultimate deliverance of the Peninsula.

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which the mountain ranges of the country afforded, maintain on the flank of the French armies in the Peninsula a permanent resistance. With this view he spent the winter in sedulously filling up the ranks and improving the discipline of the Portuguese soldiers; and the opportune arrival of thirty-one thousand stand of arms and suits of uniform from England, in the spring of 1810, contributed greatly to their improvement and efficiency. The British army was daily increasing in strength and orderly habits, from the continued rest of the winter; while the rapid progress of the vast fortifications which Wellington had begun to construct, in the October preceding, at Torres Vedras, and in interior lines between that and Lisbon, afforded a well-grounded hope that, if manned by adequate defenders, they would prove impregnable, and at length impose an impassable barrier to the hitherto irresistible progress of the French armies.¹

¹ Wel. Desp. April 20, 1810. Gurw. vi. 47; viii. 89. Oct. 20, 1809; v. 234, 274, 275, 317.

57.
Extraordinary difficulties to which Wellington was exposed.

The difficulties, however, with which the English general had to contend in the prosecution of these great designs were of no ordinary kind, and would unquestionably have been deemed insurmountable by almost any other commander. The British government itself had been seriously weakened, and its moral resolution much impaired, by the external disasters of the year 1809, and the internal dissensions in the cabinet to which they had given rise. The unfortunate result of many of their enterprises, and especially of the Walcheren expedition, had not only materially diminished their popularity, but had brought them to the very verge of overthrow. The clamour raised by the Opposition in the country against any further prosecution of the war on the Continent was so loud and vehement, and supported by so large a proportion of the middle classes, that it required no ordinary degree of firmness to persist in a system exposed to such obloquy, and hitherto attended with such disaster. In addition to this, the unfortunate dissension

between Lord Castlereagh and Mr Canning had banished from the cabinet the two men whose genius and firmness were most adequate to encounter the difficulties with which it was surrounded. The place of the former, as secretary at war, had been inadequately supplied by Lord Liverpool—a statesman possessed, indeed, of sound judgment, admirable temper in public debate, and great tact in directing the government during ordinary periods ; but without the firmness of character and clearness of perception which belong to the highest class of intellect, and therefore unfitted to take a great and commanding lead, in opposition to the current of public opinion, in the most trying crisis of the war. In civil transactions Mr Perceval, the head of the administration, was bold and intrepid ; but being bred a lawyer, and accustomed only to pacific concerns, he was in a great degree ignorant of military affairs, and did not possess sufficient confidence in his own judgment on these matters to take a due share in the responsibility of the mighty contest in which the nation was engaged. Thus, though the government had fortitude enough to continue the struggle in the Peninsula, notwithstanding the retreat from Talavera, the destruction of the Spanish armies, and the loud clamour of the Opposition ; yet they did so rather in compliance with the clear opinion expressed by Wellington, that the British army could keep its ground in Portugal, than from any conviction of their own on the subject ; and they repeatedly stated that they threw upon him the whole responsibility connected with the maintenance of the English forces on the continent of Europe.^{1*}

¹ Wel. Desp. April 7, 1810. Gurw. vi. 21, 28, 49; v. 274, 275, 280, 335.

* “The state of opinion in England is very unfavourable to the Peninsula. The ministers are as much alarmed as the public, or as the Opposition pretend to be; and they appear to be of opinion, that I am inclined to fight a desperate battle which is to answer no purpose. Their instructions are clear enough, and I am willing to act under them, although they throw upon me the whole responsibility of bringing away the army in safety, after staying in the Peninsula till it shall be necessary to evacuate it.”—*Desp.* 21st April 1810. GURW. vi. 48, 49.

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1810.
58.

Inefficiency
and weak-
ness of the
Portuguese
government.

In addition to these difficulties, which necessarily arose from the popular form of the government in Great Britain, and which are the price that every free country pays for the vast advantages of a general discussion on public affairs, the English general had to contend also with peculiar obstacles arising from the weakness and perversity of the Portuguese authorities. Notwithstanding the most vigorous representations which Wellington made to the members of the regency there, of the necessity of completing the regiments to their full nominal amount, faithfully collecting and applying the revenue, and impartially punishing all magistrates, of whatever rank, who shrank from or neglected their duty, the utmost degree of weakness, inefficiency, and corruption, prevailed throughout the entire civil department in the state. The people, indeed, were generally brave, determined, and even enthusiastic in the cause; but the persons in office partook, in a most remarkable degree, at once of the corruption of aristocratic, and the disunion of democratic, authority. The country was, in one sense, in a state of convulsion; but the spirit of the movement was, as Wellington observed, anti-Gallican, not democratic: the authorities who had been elected during the first fervour of the revolution were, for the most part, drawn from the dignified clergy or old nobility; and they were not only in a great measure ignorant of business, or influenced by local interests and prejudices, but they entertained a nervous terror of losing their popularity—a feeling which is, of all others, the most effectual extinguisher to the utility of any public officer. Even during Massena's invasion, they measured the prospects of the country, and the probable issue of the contest, not by the number of troops which they could bring into the field, or the magazines and equipments which they had provided for the army, but by the lists of persons who attended their levees, and the loudness of the cheers which they received when passing through the streets of Lisbon. A government consisting

of the aristocratic party, elected or supported by mere popular favour, is the weakest and least burdensome of all governments ; one composed of Jacobin adventurers, who have risen to public eminence in the midst of democratic convulsions, the most fearfully energetic and oppressive. Hence, although the troops taken into British pay were nominally thirty thousand, and twenty thousand more were to be raised from the resources of Portugal, yet, between the two, never more than thirty thousand could be collected round the English standards ; and although the monthly expenses of the campaign had risen to £376,000, yet the Allied army was never able to bring more than fifty-two thousand men into the field.¹

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¹ Wel. Desp.
vi. 155, 168;
vii. 424,
426, 610.

It is in the firm resolution to strive at least to overcome all these obstacles, and the magnanimous determination to risk at once his popularity, military renown, and chances of glory, rather than either abandon his duty or deviate from the plan by which he saw it could alone be discharged, that the brightest page in the career of Wellington is to be found. He was fully informed of the violent outcry raised against him by the Opposition in England. No person was so well aware of the irresolution and terror of responsibility which existed in the British government, and none knew better the corruption, not only of the Portuguese regency, but of almost all the civil functionaries in their dominions. In these difficult circumstances, however, he did not despair. Disregarding alike the clamour of the populace, both in Portugal and Great Britain, the efforts of faction, and the strength of the enemy, he looked to nothing but the discharge of duty. His principles and resolution at this time cannot be better expressed than in his own words :—"I conceive that the honour and interests of the country require that we should hold our ground here as long as possible ; and, please God, I will maintain it as long as I can ; and I will neither endeavour to shift from my own shoulders

59.
Magnanimous resolution of Wellington to discharge his duty in the face of all clamour.

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LXIII.

1810.

¹ Wel. Desp.
Jan. 14,
1810.
Gurw. v.
426.

60.
Prepara-
tions for
the grand
attack on
Portugal by
Massena.
May 1810.

April 21,
1810.

² Belm. i.
121, 122.
Nap. iii.
201, 207.
App. 568.

on those of the ministers the responsibility of the failure, by calling for means which I know they cannot give, and which, perhaps, would not add materially to the facility of attaining our object; nor will I give to the ministers, who are not strong, and who must feel the delicacy of their own situation, an excuse for withdrawing the army from a position, which, in my opinion, the honour and interest of the country require it should maintain as long as possible. I think that, if the Portuguese do their duty, I shall have enough to maintain it; if they do not, nothing that Great Britain can afford can save the country; and if from that cause I fail in saving it, and am obliged to go, I shall be able to carry away the British army.”¹

The British general had need of all his firmness and heroic sense of duty, for the forces which Napoleon was preparing for the subjugation of Portugal were immense. The three corps of Ney, Reynier, and Junot, which were under the immediate command of Marshal Massena, consisted of eighty-six thousand men present with the eagles, all veteran soldiers.* A reserve of twenty-two thousand, under Drouet, was at Valladolid, and might be relied on to supply any waste in the main body; while General Serras, with fifteen thousand, covered the right of the army on the Esla, towards Benavente and Leon, watching the army of Galicia, and resting on the fortress of Astorga, which, after a protracted siege, had at length yielded to the arms of Napoleon. The rear and communications of the French army were covered by Bessières with twenty-six thousand men, including sixteen thousand of the Young Guard, who occupied Biscay, Navarre, and Old Castile.²

The force which Wellington had at his disposal was little more than the half of this immense host, and the troops of which it was composed, with the exception of

* See Appendix, B, Chap. LXIII.

the English soldiers, could not be relied upon as equal in combat to the enemy. The British troops, organised in five divisions, with the cavalry under General Cotton, consisted of twenty-two thousand infantry and three thousand horse : and the Portuguese regular troops, whom General Beresford had trained and rendered efficient, amounted to about thirty thousand more. These forces were supported by a large body of militia, of whom nearly thirty thousand might be relied upon for desultory operations, but it was impossible to bring them into the field in regular battle with any chance of success. After making allowance for the necessary detachments in the rear, and the sick, the largest force which Wellington was ever able to collect in this campaign on the frontiers of Portugal, opposite Ciudad Rodrigo, was thirty-two thousand men ; while General Hill, who was stationed at Thomar and Abrantes to guard the valley of the Tagus, had about thirteen thousand more, of whom nearly two thousand were horse. Thus, for the defence of Portugal, Wellington could only collect, at the very utmost, forty-five thousand regular troops, which might be increased to fifty thousand when the army drew near its reserves at Lisbon ; while Massena had fully eighty thousand men under his immediate command, supported by reserves and flanking forces, from which he could draw forty thousand more.¹

Marshal Massena arrived on the 1st of June, took the command of the army, and immediately invested the fortress of Ciudad Rodrigo. General Crauford, who commanded the English advanced guard, fell back, according to Wellington's orders, after making a gallant resistance, across the Agueda, leaving the Spanish fortress to its own resources. The investment was immediately formed, and on the 25th the breaching batteries commenced their fire with great effect upon the place. Wellington instantly hastened to the spot, and took post on the Agueda with thirty-two thousand men. That was a trying moment

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LXIII.1810.
61.Force of
Wellington
for the
defence of
Portugal.¹ Nap. iii.
261, 262.
Well. Mem.
Gurw. vii.
292.

62.

Siege and
fall of Ci-
udad Rod-
rigo.

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LXIII.

1810.

for the English general, perhaps the most trying that he ever underwent. He was at the head of a gallant army, which burned with desire to raise the siege. He had promised the Spaniards, if possible, to effect it. The governor and the garrison were making a brave defence: the sound of their cannon, the incessant roar of the breaching batteries, was heard in every part of the English lines; his own reputation, that of his army, his country, appeared to be at stake. But Wellington refused, resolutely refused, to move forward a man to succour the place. He was charged, not with the defence of Ciudad Rodrigo merely, but with that of Portugal, and, eventually, with the safety and independence of the British empire. If he had descended into the plain with thirty-two thousand men, half of whom were Portuguese who had never seen a shot fired, to attack sixty-six thousand French, of whom ten thousand were admirable horse, who formed the covering force, he would have exposed his army, and probably the cause of European independence, to certain destruction. Like Fabius, therefore, he persevered in his cautious course, disregarding alike the taunts of the enemy, the cries of the Spaniards, and the reproaches of his own troops. His heart was torn, but his mind remained unmoved.* Though grievously affected by the necessity of abandoning the fortress to its fate, he never swerved from his resolution. The French, thus undisturbed in their operations, soon brought the siege to a successful issue. The fire kept up from their batteries was so violent that, on the 10th of July, several practicable breaches were made in the walls; and on the next day, as resistance and relief were alike hopeless, the governor surrendered the place, with his garrison of four thousand men, one hundred and twenty-five guns,¹ and

July 10.
¹ Tor. 258,
 268. Nap.
 iii. 263, 283.
 Belm. i.
 125. Well.
 Mem.
 Gurw. 292,
 293. Vict.
 et Conq.
 xx. 60, 67.
 Wel. Desp.
 vi. 404.

* ——"Assiduis hinc atque hinc vocibus heros
 Tunditur, et magno persentit pectore curas—
 Mens immota manet; lachrymæ volvuntur inanes."

Æneid, iv. 446.

great stores of ammunition, after having made a most gallant defence.*

Having thus secured this important fortress, in which he deposited the heavy train and reserve parks of his army, Massena lost no time in moving forward across the frontier ; while Wellington, in pursuance of the system he had adopted, retired before him, leaving Almeida also to its fate. Before its investment took place, however, a very gallant action occurred between the French advanced guard and General Crauford, who commanded the British rearguard, four thousand five hundred strong, on the banks of the Coa. Crauford, during the whole siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, had with this small force maintained his position on the French side of that stream ; and he maintained it even when they approached Almeida. He was there assailed, on the 24th of July, by a French force of twenty thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry, with thirty guns. The river in the rear could be passed only by a single bridge ; but by the great steadiness of the men, and the resolution with which the light troops fought, they succeeded in crossing the ravine without any considerable loss. No sooner were they passed, however, than the French, with extraordinary courage, dashed across the bridge ; but the head of the column was swept away by the terrible fire of the British infantry and artillery ;¹ and, after a bloody combat of two hours, a

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LXIII.

1810.

63.
Combat on
the Coa.

¹ Lond. i.
493. Vict.
et Conq. xx.
71, 73.
Gurw. vi.
364.

* How severely Wellington felt the necessity under which he lay, at this period, of abandoning the garrison of Ciudad Rodrigo, and the vast importance of the cautious system in which he then persisted, is well stated in a despatch from the English general, and a passage in the Spanish historian, Toreno, which are equally honourable to the feelings of both. " Nothing can be more irksome to me than the operations which have been carried on for the last year ; and it is very obvious that a continuance of the same cautious system will lose the little reputation which I had acquired, and the good opinion of the people of this country. Nothing, therefore, could be more desirable to me personally, than that either the contest should be given up at once, or that it should be continued with a force so sufficient as to render all opposition hopeless. In either case, the obloquy heaped upon me by the ignorant of our own country, as well as of this, and by those of this whom I am obliged to force to exertion, and who, after all, will be but imperfectly protected in their persons and property, would fall upon the government. But seeing, as I

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heavy rain separated the combatants, and Crauford retired with his division to the main body of the army. In this gallant affair, both parties sustained a loss of between four and five hundred men.

64.
Siege and
fall of Al-
meida.
Aug. 15.

All obstacles to the investment of Almeida being now removed, it took place on the following day. The trenches were opened on the 15th of August. The fire of the place was at first extremely well sustained; and as the garrison consisted of four thousand Portuguese regulars and militia, and the governor, General Cox, was a man of known resolution, a protracted resistance was expected. But these anticipations proved fallacious, in consequence of a frightful catastrophe, which, at the very outset of the bombardment, deprived the besieged of all their means of defence. At daybreak of the 26th, a heavy fire commenced upon the place from sixty-five guns, to which the garrison replied during the whole forenoon with great vigour and effect; but at five o'clock in the evening a bomb was thrown, which accidentally fell into the great magazine of the fortress containing one hundred and fifty thousand pounds of powder. The terrible explosion which followed blew up the cathedral, the principal edifices in the town, a large part of the houses, and occasioned many breaches in the ramparts.¹ The consternation produced by this frightful catastrophe was such that on the same evening the garrison mutinied, and

¹ Lond. i.
494, 497.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
71, 75. Nap.
iii. 304, 306.
Well. Desp.
Gurw. vi.
364.

do, more than a chance of final success, if we can maintain our position in this country, although probably none of a departure from our cautious defensive system; I should not do my duty by the government, if I did not inform them of the real situation of affairs, and urge them, with importunity even, to greater exertion."—*Despatch*, 19th August 1810; Gurw. vii. 346, 347. "We feel ourselves bound to say," says Toreno, "that Wellington on that occasion acted as a prudent captain, if to raise the siege it was necessary to risk a battle. His forces were not superior to those of the enemy; and his troops and the Portuguese were not sufficiently disciplined to be able to manœuvre with effect in presence of such a foe, or feel sufficient confidence in themselves to go into battle with the enemy. The battle, if gained, would only have saved Ciudad Rodrigo, but not decided the fate of the war. If lost, the English army would have been totally destroyed, the road to Lisbon laid open, and the Spanish cause rudely shaken, if not struck to the ground."—Toreno, iii. 367.

compelled the governor, who had retired into the citadel, to surrender ; and on the following day the garrison, still consisting of three thousand men, were made prisoners, and a hundred and fifteen pieces of heavy cannon taken.

Wellington now retreated down the valley of the Mondego, and the dispositions of Massena soon showed that he was about to follow in the same direction ; the extraordinary difficulties experienced by Junot in 1808, in his advance into Portugal by the road of Abrantes, having deterred the French general from penetrating into the country by that route. For the same reason Reynier's corps, which had been posted in the valley of the Tagus opposite to Hill's division, marched rapidly across the mountains from the valley of the Tagus to that of the Mondego ; upon which Hill, moving parallel to him, crossed the Tagus at Villa Velha, and moved swiftly to join Wellington by the pass of Espinhal. The French marshal's instructions had been to invade Portugal at the same time by both banks of the Tagus ; but as the English general was possessed of an interior line of communication, by the bridge of Villa Velha, over the Tagus, he justly deemed it too hazardous an experiment to attempt such a division of his force in presence of an enterprising enemy, who might suddenly fall with superior force upon one division of his forces, when detached by a broad river from the other. The whole French force, accordingly, was ordered to assemble in the valley of the Mondego, on the 16th of September ; and Wellington, having ascertained that the enemy were concentrating all their forces, immediately ordered Hill to join him with the right wing of the army. This important movement through the mountains was effected with great expedition, and on the 21st the two corps of the allies completed their junction at Alva, in the valley of the Mondego. Meanwhile ten thousand militia, under General Trant, were collected in the mountains between that river and Oporto,¹ and already occupied the defiles leading to

CHAP.
LXIII.

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65.
Retreat of
Wellington
into the
interior of
Portugal.

Sept. 21.
1 Nap. iii.
312, 320.
Jom. iii.
428, 429.
Well. Mem.
Gurw. vii.
296, 297.
Belm. i.
129, 130.

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1810.

Lamego. The most peremptory orders had been given by the retreating general to lay waste the country, destroy the mills, and deprive the enemy of all their means of subsistence.

66.
He crosses
the Monde-
go, and
takes post
at Busaco.

Atlas,
Plate 63.

Meanwhile, however, the continued retreat of the English troops, and the multitude of fugitive peasants and proprietors who flocked into Lisbon, produced the utmost consternation in that capital. Wellington soon felt the necessity of making an effort to support the drooping spirits of the people, and inspire additional energy into the governments of both countries. He therefore resolved to take post on the first favourable ground which might present itself; and as Massena was descending the valley of the Mondego by the northern bank of the river, he crossed his whole army over, and took post on the summit of the ridge of BUSACO. This mountain range runs from the northern shores of the Mondego in a northerly direction, for about eight miles, till it unites with the great ridge which separates the valley of the Mondego from that of the Douro. Thus this sierra forms a natural barrier, running along the northern bank of the Mondego; and the same ridge is continued on the opposite side of the river under the name of Sierra da Murcella, which runs in a southerly direction till it joins the great chain which separates the valley of the Mondego from that of the Tagus. On the summit of the northern portion of this range Wellington collected his whole army on the evening of the 26th, in all about fifty thousand men; while Massena, with seventy-two thousand, lay at its foot, determined to force the passage.¹

Sept. 26.
1 Well.
Mem. vii.
296; vi. 445,
446. Jom.
iii. 429, 430.
Nap. iii.
321, 322,
324.

67.
Night before
the battle of
Busaco.
Sept. 26.

The French marshal was not ignorant of the strength of the position which the English general had now assumed, or of the perilous nature of the situation in which he was placed; for, while lying at the foot of the ridge of Busaco, he received intelligence that Colonel Trant had, with ten regiments of militia, attacked the reserve artillery and military chest, and captured

the whole, with eight hundred prisoners; and already the communication with the Spanish frontier was entirely cut off by the Portuguese light parties. But the orders of the Emperor were pressing, and he was well aware that fight he must, at whatever disadvantage.* Next day, therefore, collecting all his force, Massena made preparations for a desperate attack upon the English position, at daybreak of the morning of the 27th. The British army, during the night, lay in dense masses on the summit of the mountain. The sky was clear, and the dark rocky eminences rising on both sides of the pass were crowned by the fires of countless bivouacs. The veterans in the English army, accustomed to similar scenes of excitement, slept profoundly on their stony beds; but many of the younger soldiers, who were now to witness a battle for the first time, were kept awake by the novelty and solemnity of the scene around them. As the first streaks of dawn were beginning to appear over the eastern hills, a rustling noise was heard in the wooded dells which ran up to the crest of the mountains. It arose from the French outposts, who, stealing forward unobserved during the night, had thus got close to the pickets of the English position without being perceived. The alarm was instantly given, and the troops started to their arms at all points.¹

CHAP.
LXIII.
1810.

Sept. 27.

¹ Gurw. vi.
446, 447.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
83, 85.
Nap. iii.
331.

It was full time, for, in a few minutes more, the French in two massive columns were upon them. Ney, with three divisions, numbering fully twenty-five thousand combatants, advanced against the British left, by the great road leading to the convent of Busaco; while Reynier, with two, moved by St Antonio de Cantaro,

68.
Battle of
Busaco.

* In an intercepted letter from Napoleon at this period, to Massena, he says, "Lord Wellington has only 18,000 men, Hill has only 6000—and it would be ridiculous to suppose that 25,000 English can balance 60,000 French, if the latter do not trifle, but fall boldly on, after having well observed where the blow may be given. You have 12,000 cavalry, and four times as much artillery as is necessary for Portugal. Leave 6000 cavalry and a proportion of guns between Ciudad Rodrigo, Alcantara, and Salamanca, and with the rest commence operations."—NAP. iii. 307, 308.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xx.
83, 87.
Nap. iii.
331, 333.
Wel. Desp.
30th Sept.
1810.
Gurw. vi.
446, 447.

69.
Bloody de-
feat of the
French.

against their right, about three miles distant. The former, headed by Loison's division, preceded by a cloud of light troops, came rapidly up the wooded hollow which leads to Busaco, and the British sharpshooters, driven before them, soon emerged from the woods, breathless and in disorder. Crauford, whose division stood at that point, had stationed his artillery most advantageously to play upon the enemy during their ascent from the hollow ; but though the guns were worked with extraordinary rapidity, nothing could stop the undaunted advance of the French troops. Emerging bravely from the hollow, they soon reached the crest of the mountain. The British artillery was quickly drawn to the rear. The shout of victory was already heard from the French line, when suddenly Crauford, with the 43d and 52d regiments, springing out of a hollow behind the highest part of the ridge, where they lay concealed, appeared on the summit, and eighteen hundred British bayonets sparkled on the crest of the hill. The head of the French column instantly fired, but in vain. It was broken and driven back. Both its flanks were overlapped by the English line, and three terrible discharges, within a few yards' distance, drove them headlong down, in wild confusion, with dreadful loss, to the bottom of the hollow.¹

The attack on the British right by the two divisions of Reynier's corps, met with no better success. The ground in that quarter was indeed of comparatively easy ascent ; and although the British and Portuguese skirmishers opposed a vigorous resistance, and eight pieces of cannon played incessantly on the advancing column, yet nothing could arrest the ardour and gallantry of the French, who mounted with an intrepid step up the hill, and after routing a Portuguese regiment stationed before them, established themselves on the summit, and were beginning to deploy to the right and left. The British position in this point appeared to be carried, and the third division, part of which had been forced to give way, could with

difficulty maintain itself against the dense and victorious column which, wheeling to the right, and moving swiftly along the summit of the ridge, had forced itself into the centre of the line. General Leith and General Picton, seeing the danger, brought up their divisions, and the 45th and 88th regiments charged the enemy with such vigour that, after a desperate struggle, they were hurled down the hill, the British firing upon them as long as their muskets would carry, but not pursuing, lest their ranks should be broken, and the crest of the hill be again won. The other French division of Reynier's corps, which advanced up a hollow way, a little to the left of his main column, was repulsed by the left of Leith's division, before they reached the summit of the mountain. After these bloody defeats, the French made no attempt again to carry the top of the ridge, though Loison and Marchand maintained a long and obstinate conflict in the hollows at its foot; but their efforts were effectually held in check by the brigades of Pack and Spencer. At length, towards evening, Massena, wearied of the fruitless butchery, drew off his troops, after having sustained a loss of eighteen hundred killed and three thousand wounded, including among the latter Generals Foy and Merle, while the total loss of the allies was not above thirteen hundred men.¹

The battle of Busaco produced an astonishing effect at the time at which it was fought; and, in its ultimate consequences, was beyond all question one of the most important that took place in the whole Peninsular war. It for the first time brought the Portuguese troops into battle with the French, and under such advantageous circumstances as at once gave them a victory. Incalculable was the moral effect of this glorious triumph. To have stood side by side with the British soldiers in a pitched battle, and shared with them in the achievement of defeating the French, was a distinction which they could hardly have hoped to attain so early in the campaign.

CHAP.
LXIII.
1810.

¹ Nap. iii.
329, 334.
Gurw. vi.
446, 450.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
82, 87.
Belm. i. 131.

70.
Important
results of
this battle.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

Wellington judiciously bestowed the highest praises upon their conduct in this battle, and declared in his public despatch, "that they were worthy of contending in the same ranks with the British soldiers in this interesting cause, which they afford the best hopes of saving." It may safely be affirmed that, on the day after the battle, the strength of the Portuguese troops was doubled. The sight of this auspicious change dispelled every desponding feeling from the British army. No presentiments of ultimate discomfiture were any longer entertained. The plan of defence which the far-seeing sagacity of their chief had formed, revealed itself to the meanest sentinel in the ranks; and the troops of both nations prepared to follow the standard of their chief wherever he should lead them, with that ready alacrity and undoubting confidence which is at once the forerunner and the cause of ultimate triumph.¹

¹ Wel. Desp.
30th Sept.
1810.
Gurw. iv.
446, 449.

71.
Massena
turns the
British left.

Wellington has since declared, that he expected that the battle of Busaco would have stopped the advance of Massena into Portugal; and that, if the French general had been governed by the principles of the military art, he would have halted and retired after that check; and the English general wrote to Romana immediately after the battle, that he had no doubt whatever of the success of the campaign.² But fortunately for England and the cause of European freedom, Massena was forced on by that necessity of advancing in the hazardous pursuit of doubtful success which afterwards drove Napoleon to Moscow, and is at last the consequence and the punishment, both in civil and military affairs, of revolutionary aggression. Impelled by this necessity, the French marshal, finding that he could not carry the English position by attack in front, resolved to turn it by a flank movement; and accordingly, on the following day, he moved on his own right, through a pass in the mountains which led to Sardao, and brought him on the great road from Oporto to Coimbra and Lisbon. To attempt such

² Wellington
to Romana,
30th Sept.
1810,
Gurw. vi.
450; and 3d
Nov. 1810,
Gurw. vi.
552.

Sept. 28.

a flank movement with an army that had sustained so severe and bloody a check, in presence of a brave and enterprising enemy, was a hazardous undertaking; but the French general had no alternative but to run the risk, or remeasure his steps to the Spanish frontier. Wellington, from the summit of the Busaco ridge, clearly perceived the French troops defiling in that direction on the evening of the 28th; but he wisely resolved not to disturb the operation. By attacking the French army when in march, he might bring the Portuguese levies into action under less favourable circumstances than those in which they had recently fought, and which might weaken or destroy the moral influence of the victory just achieved. His policy now was to leave nothing to chance. Behind him were the lines of Torres Vedras, now completely finished, and mounted with six hundred guns; against which he was well convinced all the waves of French conquest would beat in vain.¹

CHAP.
LXIII.
1810.

¹ Gurw. vi.
552. Belm.
i. 132. Jom.
iii. 432.
Nap. iii.
336, 340.

Accordingly he immediately gave orders for the army to retire to their stronghold. The troops broke up from their position at Busaco on the 30th, and driving the whole population of the country within their reach before them, retired rapidly by Coimbra and Leyria, to Torres Vedras, which the advanced guard reached on the 8th October; and the whole army was collected within the lines on the 15th. The French followed more slowly, and in very disorderly array; while Trant, with the Portuguese militia, came up so rapidly on their rear, that on the 7th of October he made himself master of Coimbra, with above five thousand men, principally sick and wounded, who had been left there. This disaster, however, made no change in the dispositions of the French marshal. Pressing resolutely forward, without any regard either to magazines, of which he had none, or to his communications in the rear, which were entirely cut off by the Portuguese militia,² he marched headlong

^{72.}
Wellington
retires to
Torres
Vedras.

² Wel. Desp.
30th Sept.
1810.
Gurw. vi.
448, 450;
and Mem.
vii. 297.
Nap. iii.
336, 351.
Jom. iii.
432, 433.
Belm. i.
132, 133.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

73.
Description
of the lines
of Torres
Vedras.

Atlas,
Plate 64.

on, and arrived in the middle of October in sight of the lines of Torres Vedras, of which, strange to say, he had never before heard, but which now rose in appalling strength to bar his farther progress towards the Portuguese capital.

The lines of Torres Vedras, on which the British engineers had previously been engaged for above a twelvemonth, and which have acquired immortal celebrity from being the position before which the desolating torrent of French conquest was first permanently arrested, consisted of three distinct ranges of defence, one within another, which formed so many intrenched positions, each of which required to be successively forced before the invading army could reach Lisbon. The first, which was twenty-nine miles long, extended from Alhandra on the Tagus to Zezambre on the sea-coast. The second, in general about eight miles in the rear of the first, stretched from Quintella on the Tagus, to the mouth of the St Lorenza on the sea. The third extended from Passo d'Arcos on the Tagus, to the Tower of Janqueira on the coast. Within this interior line was an intrenched camp designed to protect the embarkation of the troops, if that extremity should become necessary, and it rested on Fort St Julian, whose high ramparts and deep ditches rendered any attempt at escalade impracticable; so that, in the event of disaster, the most ample means were provided for bringing away the troops in safety. Of these lines, the second was incomparably the strongest, and it was there that Wellington had originally intended to make his stand, the first being meant rather to retard the advance of the enemy and take off the first edge of his attack, than to be the permanent resting-place of the allied forces. But the long delay of Massena at the sieges of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, had given so much time to the English engineers, that the first line was completed, and deemed susceptible of defence, when the French arrived before it. It consisted of thirty redoubts placed on a

ridge of heights, on which were mounted, in all, one hundred and forty guns; the great fort of Sobral, in the centre, bristling with forty-five pieces of heavy cannon, was perched upon an eminence that overlooked the whole exterior lines, and from it signal-posts communicated over their whole extent. An admirable road, running along the position, enabled one part of the army to communicate rapidly with the other; the highways piercing through this terrible barrier were all pallisadoed; the redoubts were armed with chevaux-de-frise, and a glacis was cut away to make room for their fire; and the intervening spaces which were not fortified, were formed into encampments for the troops, under shelter of the guns of one or other of the works, where they might give battle to the enemy with every prospect of success. On the whole lines, no less than six hundred pieces of artillery were mounted on one hundred and fifty redoubts. Neither the Romans in ancient, nor Napoleon in modern times, have left such a proof of their power and perseverance; and they will remain in indestructible majesty to the end of the world, an enduring monument of the grandeur of conception in the chief who could design, and the nation which could execute, such a stupendous undertaking.¹

The situation of the English army in this astonishing position, was as favourable as the ground which they occupied was carefully fortified. By drawing so close to the centre of his power, Wellington had greatly augmented the physical strength of his forces. Strong reinforcements arrived from England just after the troops entered the lines; and the Marquis Romana, who was summoned up by Wellington to join in the defence of the chief stronghold which still maintained the independence of the Peninsula, joined on the 20th of October with five thousand men. There were now about thirty thousand English troops in the front line, besides twenty-five thousand Portuguese and five thousand Spaniards, in all sixty thousand men, perfectly disposable, and unfettered

¹ Belm. i.
133, 135.
Nap. iii.
351, 359.
Jom. iii.
433, 434.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
93, 95.

74.
Junction of
Romana,
and admirable
position of the
British
army.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

by the care of the fortifications ; while a superb body of marines that had been sent out from England, the militia of Estremadura and Lisbon, and the Portuguese heavy artillery corps, formed a mass of nearly sixty thousand additional combatants, of great value in defending positions, and manning the numerous redoubts which were scattered through the lines. Altogether, before the end of October, one hundred and thirty thousand men received rations within the British lines ; while twenty ships of the line, and a hundred large transports, provided the sure means of drawing off the army in case of disaster. Yet such were the inexhaustible resources which the vigour and activity of government had provided for this enormous warlike multitude, that not only was no want experienced during the whole time that the army lay in the lines of Torres Vedras, but the combatants of all descriptions, and the whole pacific multitude who had taken refuge with them, amounting with the population of Lisbon to at least four hundred thousand more, were amply provided with subsistence, and the troops of every description never were so healthy or in such high spirits.* The military annals of no age of the world have so stupendous an assemblage of military and naval strength to commemorate in such a position ; and it was worthy of England, which had ever taken the lead in the cause of European deliverance, thus to stand forth, with unprecedented vigour, in the eighteenth year of the war.¹

Massena, with all his resolution, paused at the sight of this formidable barrier, and employed several days in

¹ Nap. iii.
358, 359.
Belm. i.
134, 135.
Well. Mem.
Gurw. vii.
297, 298.
Jom. iii.
433, 434.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
101, 102.

* An interesting incident occurred when the troops were lying in this position. In one of the advanced fieldworks, within range of the enemy's guns, a company of soldiers was observed lying on the ground, clustered round their captain, who was reading aloud ; and the tale, to which the men were listening attentively, was interrupted only by a loud shout when any of the cannon-balls struck the bank behind which they were lying. It was Captain, now Sir Adam Ferguson, who was reading to his company the description of the battle in the sixth canto of the "*Lady of the Lake*," which had just been published, and reached the army.—LOCKHART, *Life of Scott*, ii. 350.

reconnoitring the lines in every direction, while his troops were gradually collecting at the foot of the intrenchments. Much time was consumed in endeavouring to discover a weak point in which they could be assailed with some prospect of success. But although the outer line exhibited a front in several places many miles in length, without any intrenchments—and the orders of Napoleon were positive that he should immediately attack if he had the least chance of success—yet the great advantage derived by the allies from the redoubts with which their position was strengthened, and which enabled the English general to throw his whole disposable force upon any point that might be assailed, rendered it evidently hopeless to make the attempt. In the centre of the British army, twenty-five thousand men were encamped close round the great redoubt of Sobral, upon the Monte Agraca, who could have reached any menaced point of the line in two hours. The French general, therefore, contented himself with sending off Foy to Paris, under a strong escort, to demand instructions from the Emperor.¹

Meanwhile, the contest between the two armies was reduced to the question—Who would starve first? Massena, fondly hoping that Wellington would quit his lines to attack him in his own position, or that the British government, or the regency at Lisbon, would be intimidated by the near approach of his army, and abandon the contest, held out for above a month, until he had consumed every article of subsistence which the country occupied by his troops afforded; and the men, severely weakened by disease, were reduced to the utmost want and misery. The Portuguese militia, fifteen thousand strong, drew round his rear, and became so adventurous that they cut off all his communications, and confined his army to the resources of the ground which it actually occupied. Yet such was the power of extracting the resources of a country which long practice had given to the French generals, that we have the authority of the English general for the

CHAP.
LXIII.1810.
75.Continued
distresses of
the French.¹ Jom. iii.
435. Gurw.
vii. 54, 55,
298.^{76.}
Who at
length
retreat.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1810.

¹ Wel. Desp.
Gurw. vii.
54, 55, 298,
299. Mas-
sena's Re-
port to Na-
poleon, 29th
Oct. 1810.
Belm. i.
App. 58.

assertion, that Massena contrived to maintain sixty thousand men and twenty thousand horses for two months, in a country in which Wellington could not have maintained an English division, even with all the advantages of British wealth and of the favourable inclination of the inhabitants. At length, however, every article in the country being consumed, and the inhabitants, whom the French had oppressed, as well as themselves, reduced to utter starvation, Massena broke up from his position on the 14th of November, and, for the first time since the accession of Napoleon, the French troops COMMENCED A LASTING RETREAT.¹

77.
Position of
the French
at Santa-
rem.

—
Atlas,
Plate 48.

No sooner was the joyful report brought in by the outposts that the French army was retiring, than the British issued from their intrenchments, and Wellington commenced a pursuit at the head of twenty thousand men. Desirous, however, of committing nothing to chance in a contest in which skill and foresight were thus visibly in a manner compelling fortune to declare in his favour, he did not press the French rearguard with any great force, but despatched Hill across the Tagus, to move upon Abrantes, while the bulk of the army followed on the great road by Cartaxo, towards Santarem. But Massena, whose great military qualities were now fully awakened, had no intention of retreating to any considerable distance; and after having retired about forty miles, he halted at the latter town, and there, with much skill, took up a position eminently calculated to combine the great objects of maintaining his ground in an unassailable situation, and at the same time providing supplies for his army. A strong rearguard was rested on Santarem—a town with old walls, situated on the top of a high hill, which could be approached only by a narrow causeway running through the marshes formed by the Rio Major and the Tagus.² While this formidable position, the strongest in Portugal to an army advancing from the sea-coast, effectually protected his rear, the main body of his

² Well. Memoir, Gurw. viii. 478, 479; and Desp. 5th Jan. 1811. Belm. i. 163. Jom. iii. 491, 493

troops was cantoned behind in the valley of the Zezere, the rich fields of which, giving food to a hundred and ten thousand inhabitants, afforded ample supplies of grain, while the extensive mountains on either side yielded a very large number of cattle.

The question of attacking the enemy in this strong ground was well considered by Wellington, but finally abandoned from a conviction that such an attempt could not, from the flooded state of the marshes on either side, succeed without immense loss; and that to hazard it, would be to expose the allied army to the chances of war, while certainty of ultimate success was in their power. Magnanimously sacrificing his passion for glory to his sense of duty, therefore, Wellington resolved not to run the risk of an attack. He contented himself with taking up a position in front of Santarem, and narrowly watching the Tagus, on which the French marshal was preparing boats, and all the materials for passing the river. If he could have succeeded in that enterprise, and transported the seat of war into the Alentejo, he would have reached a country hitherto untouched, and offering resources of every kind for his army. But Wellington anticipated his design, and detached Hill with two divisions to the opposite bank of the Tagus, where he was reinforced by a large part of the militia of that province. That active general guarded the banks of the river so effectually, and established batteries upon all the prominent parts with such skill, that the French generals found it impossible to effect the passage. Thus, Massena was reduced to maintain his army entirely from the resources he could extract on the northern bank of the Tagus; and although he was joined by Drouet's corps with ten thousand men in the end of December, yet he did not deem himself in sufficient strength to attack the English army. Meanwhile the British government, fully roused at last to the vast importance of the war in Portugal, and the fair hopes of conducting it to a successful issue, made great efforts to

CHAP.
LXIII.

1811.

78.

Wellington declines to attack him, and Massena at length retires.

Dec. 29.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1811.

March 2,
1811.
1 Wel. Desp.
5th Jan.
1811; and
Mem. viii.
478, 479,
480. Nap.
iii. 392, 401,
452, 455.
Belm. i.
163, 165.
Jom. iii.
491, 494.

reinforce their army. The troops embarked were delayed by contrary winds for above six weeks after they had been put on board; but at length they set sail on the 20th of February, and landed at Lisbon on the 2d of March. No sooner did the French marshal hear of their arrival, than he broke up with his whole forces, taking the road through the mountains by Guarda to Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo: and Wellington, still keeping Beresford, who had succeeded Hill, with two divisions, in the Alentejo, to render assistance to the Spaniards, who were at this time hard pressed in Estremadura, commenced the pursuit with forty thousand British and Portuguese troops.¹

79.
Operations
of Soult in
Estrema-
dura.

It was hard to say whether the position of the French or English general was most critical, when Massena thus, in good earnest, began his retreat from Portugal; for such, during the winter, had been the progress of the French in Estremadura, that it was extremely doubtful whether the British would not speedily be threatened with invasion by a formidable army on the side of Elvas and the Alentejo. Napoleon was no sooner informed of the serious aspect of the war in Portugal, than he ordered Soult to confide to Victor the tedious duty of blockading Cadiz, while he himself should march with all his disposable forces upon Estremadura and Badajoz. In pursuance of these directions, that able chief set out from Seville on the 2d of January, with twenty thousand men, taking the road by Llerena for Badajoz. The troops which Romana had left under Mendizabel in that province, after he himself joined Wellington at Torres Vedras, consisted only of two Spanish divisions of infantry, and a brigade of Portuguese cavalry, not amounting in all to twelve thousand combatants. Too weak to oppose any resistance to Soult's considerable force, these troops, which were under the command of Mendizabel and Ballasteros, retired under the cannon of Badajoz and Olivenza. Four thousand men, imprudently thrown without any provisions into the latter fortress,

surrendered after twelve days, on the 22d of January ; and Soult, then collecting all his troops, took up a position before Badajoz. No sooner was he informed of the danger of that important fortress, than Wellington resolved to despatch Romana, with the two divisions which had so seasonably joined him at Torres Vedras, to co-operate in its relief. Just as he was preparing, however, to set out on this important expedition, this noble Spaniard, at once the bravest, the most skilful, and most disinterested of all the Peninsular generals, was seized with a disease in the heart, of which he suddenly died at Cartaxo.* His loss was severely felt by the Spanish army ; for Mendizabel, who succeeded to the command, was totally disqualified for the duty with which he was intrusted. On the 30th of January, the Spanish divisions from Wellington's army joined the remainder of Mendizabel's troops, with which, in the first week of February, he took up a position under the cannon of Badajoz, with his right resting on the fort of St Christoval, forming one of the outer walls of that city. The arrival of this formidable reinforcement rendered Soult's situation extremely critical ; for the necessity of keeping up his communications had reduced the forces under his command to sixteen thousand men, and the Spaniards, with a force nearly equal, occupied a strong position, resting on the cannon of the fortress.¹

From this critical position he was soon relieved by the astonishing negligence and fatuity of the Spanish general, which brought destruction on his own army, and ultimately occasioned the fall of that important fortress, with the protection of which he was intrusted. It was

CHAP.
LXIII.1811.
Jan. 22.

Jan. 23.

Feb. 6.

1 Well.
Mem.
Gurw. viii.
475, 476.
Jom. iii.
481, 483.
Belm. i.
162, 163.
Tor. iv. 12,
20.80.
Total defeat
of Mendiza-
bel at the
Geboro.

* "In Romana," said Wellington, "the Spanish army have lost their brightest ornament, his country their most upright patriot, and the world the most strenuous and zealous defender of the cause in which we are engaged ; and I shall always acknowledge with gratitude the assistance which I received from him, as well by his operation as by his counsel, since he had been joined with this army."—WELL. *Desp.* 26th January 1811 ; GURW. vii. 190.

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regained only in after times by torrents of English blood. Wellington had repeatedly advised Mendizabel to strengthen his position under the walls of the place with intrenchments, in order that he might possess an impregnable station from which he might co-operate in its defence ; and, if he had done so, he would in all probability have preserved it for the Spanish arms. Such, however, was his ignorant presumption, that he deemed it wholly unnecessary to follow this advice : and as his position was separated from that of the French by the Guadiana and the Geboro, both of which were flooded with rains, he contented himself with breaking down a bridge over the latter stream, and left his army in negligent security on its bank. On the 18th of February, however, Soult, observing that the water of the rivers had fallen, conceived the audacious design of passing both, and surprising the Spaniards amidst their dream of security. Late on that evening he forded the Guadiana at the French ferry, four miles above the confluence of the Geboro. That stream, however, was still to cross ; but next morning, before daybreak, the passage was accomplished under cover of a thick mist ; and, as the first dawn broke, the Spanish outposts near the ruined bridge were alarmed by the tirailleurs, who were already on the opposite bank. The cavalry forded five miles further up, and speedily threatened the Spanish flank, while Mortier, with six thousand foot, assailed their front. The contest was only of a few minutes' duration : horse, foot, and cannon were speedily driven together in frightful confusion into the centre ; the cavalry cut their way through the throng and escaped ; but the infantry were almost all slain or made prisoners. Mendizabel fled with a thousand men to Elvas ; two thousand got into Badajoz : but eight thousand, with the whole artillery, were taken ; and not a remnant of the army of Estremadura remained in the field.¹

¹ Tor. iv.
20, 22. Jom.
iii. 483, 484.
Nap. iii.
431, 436.
Well. Desp.
Gurw. vii.
278 ; and
viii. 478.

Soult immediately resumed the siege of Badajoz, but

with little prospect of success, for the ramparts were of great strength ; the garrison consisted of nine thousand men, amply supplied with provisions ; and the extreme necessities of Massena's army on the Tagus, rendered it more than doubtful whether he would not speedily be driven to a retreat, and Beresford approach with two English divisions to raise the siege. From this difficulty he was again relieved by his good fortune, and the treachery of the Spanish governor of the fortress. Manecho, who first had the command, was a veteran of approved courage ; and so far from being discouraged by the rout of Mendizabel, he vigorously prepared for his defence, and gave out that he would rival the glories of Gerona and Saragossa. But this gallant Spaniard was unfortunately killed a few days after the fire began ; and Imaz, who succeeded to the command, was a man of a very different stamp. Without vigour or resolution to keep up the spirits of his troops, he was, what was rare among the Spaniards, accessible to bribes from the enemy. Under his irresolute or treacherous management, the enemy's works rapidly advanced, the rampart was broken down in one part, and the fire of the place considerably weakened, though the enemy had only six battering guns, of which one was dismounted. Still the breach was not practicable ; provisions were plentiful ; the garrison was yet eight thousand strong ; a great disaster had befallen the French in Andalusia, and advices had been received by three different channels from Wellington, that Massena was in full retreat ; that Beresford, with twelve thousand men, was rapidly approaching, and that in a few days the fortress would be relieved. Don Juan Garcia, the second in command, was clear in a council of war to hold out. Camerio, the chief of the artillery, was of the same opinion : but though Imaz voted with them in the council, he, on the same day, shamefully surrendered the place with eight thousand men, and a hundred and seventy guns.² In forty-eight hours Beres-

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81.Siege and
fall of
Badajoz.

March 9.

² Tor. iv. 23,
25. Nap. iii.
450, 451.
Well. Desp.
viii. 480,
482; and
Desp. 20th
March 1811.
Gurw. vii.
371.

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82.
Operations
before
Cadiz.

ford arrived, and the fortress, but for this treachery, would have been relieved.

Soult had no sooner crowned with this marvellous success his short but brilliant campaign, in which, with a force not exceeding twenty thousand men, he had carried two fortresses, and taken or destroyed an equal number of the enemy, than he returned with all imaginable expedition to Andalusia, where his presence was loudly called for by a disaster, all but decisive, which had occurred to the blockading force before Cadiz during his absence. Sir Thomas Graham, who commanded the British and Portuguese troops in that city, was encouraged by the great diminution of the besieging force under Victor, in consequence of Soult's absence, to try an expedition, with a view to raise the siege. The allies sailed on the 21st, and landed at Algesiras on the day following; an attack was fixed for the 28th

Feb. 28.

February; but, owing to the prevalence of contrary winds, it did not take place for a week later. Graham had collected four thousand British infantry and two hundred horse at Tarifa; on the 29th, La Pena landed with ten thousand Spanish troops; and, taking the command of the whole allied force, moved against the enemy. In a few days his force was increased by the guerillas, who came in from every direction, to twelve thousand foot and eight hundred horse. Meanwhile, however, the French had called in their troops from all quarters, and fifteen thousand men were assembled round the standards of Victor before Cadiz, besides five thousand at Medina Sidonia, and other places in his rear. The allies, however, noways daunted, advanced to raise the siege; and on the 5th reached the heights of BARROSA, about four miles from the mouth of the Santi Petri, when Victor came out of his lines to give them battle.¹

March 5.
1 Graham's
Desp. 6th
March 1811.
Gurw. vii.
382. Nap.
iii. 440.
Tor. iv. 26,
33.

General Graham was extremely anxious to receive the attack on the heights of Barrosa, where his little band would have had an excellent position to repel the enemy.

La Pena, however, ordered him to move through the wood of Bermeja towards the sea-coast; but no sooner did he commence this movement than the Spanish general followed after him, leaving the important ridge of Barrosa, the key of the whole ground, unoccupied. The moment Victor was apprised of this, he directed his whole disposable force, about nine thousand strong, composed of the divisions of Ruffin, Laval, and Vilatte, all veterans inured to victory, with fourteen guns, to attack the heights. Some Spanish troops, whom they met on their ascent, were quickly overthrown; and Graham, while still entangled in the wood, was apprised by the torrent of fugitives which came after him, that the heights were won, and the enemy posted on the strong ground in his rear. An ordinary general would have thought only in such a crisis of retiring to the Isle of Leon, and extricating himself as rapidly as possible from his perilous situation; but Graham, who had the eye as well as the soul of a great commander, at once perceived, that to attempt this in presence of such an enemy, with the Spaniards in full retreat, and already out of sight, would rapidly bring on disaster. He instantly took his course. Ten guns, under Major Duncan, wheeled into line, and commenced a destructive fire on the enemy's masses, which were now descending the hill; and the infantry, hastily formed into two columns, under Colonel Wheatley and General Dilkes, faced about and advanced to meet the foe.¹

The onset at both points was exceedingly fierce. The French, as usual, came on in column, preceded by a cloud of gallant light troops, who concealed the direction of their attack by a rapid fire; and Laval's division advanced, unchecked even by the admirably directed fire of Duncan's guns, which discharged round-shot and canister with extraordinary rapidity. At length, having reached the British line, they were met by a determined charge of the 87th and 28th regiments, broken and driven back, with the loss of two guns and an eagle. The routed

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83.
Battle of
Barrosa.
March 6.

Atlas,
Plate 65.

¹ Sir T.
Graham's
Desp. 6th
March 1811.
Gurw. vii.
391. Nap.
iii. 42.
Belm. i.
172, 173.

84.
Victory of
the English.

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¹ Sir T.
Graham's
Desp. 6th
March 1811.
Gurw. vii.
382. Belm.
i. 173. Nap.
iii. 442, 443.

85.
Who, how-
ever, re-en-
tered the walls
of Cadiz.

² Sir T.
Graham's
Desp. 6th
March 1811.
Gurw. vii.
382. Nap.
iii. 442, 445.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
226, 231.
Belm. i.
173, 174.

division strove to rally on their reserve, but they too were thrown into disorder, and the battle was won on that side. Meanwhile Dilkes's column was not less successful against Ruffin's division, which was still on the brow of the hill. The Guards, supported by two British regiments, there boldly mounted the steep: Ruffin's men, confident of victory, descended half-way to meet them, and with loud shouts the rival nations met in mortal conflict. The struggle was very violent, and for some time doubtful; but at length the French were forced back to the top, and ultimately driven down the other side with extraordinary slaughter: Ruffin and Chaudon Rousseau, both generals of division, being severely wounded and taken. The two discomfited wings retired by converging lines to the rear, and soon met.¹

They tried to retrieve the day, but in vain. Duncan's guns, following close after them, with a rapid and well-sustained fire, played on their ranks; Ponsonby, with his two hundred German horse, charged their retiring cavalry, overthrew them, and took two more guns; and if La Pena had sent merely his eight hundred Spanish dragoons and powerful horse-artillery to the fight, Victor must have sustained a total defeat, and raised the siege of Cadiz. But not a man did that base general send to the aid of his heroic allies, though two of his battalions, impelled by the instinct of brave men, returned without orders to aid them when they heard the firing, and appeared on the field at the close of the day. The French thus withdrew without farther disaster: and Graham, thoroughly disgusted with the conduct of the Spanish general, some days after re-entered the Isle of Leon, bringing with him in triumph six French guns, one eagle, and three hundred prisoners, after having killed and wounded two thousand of the enemy, with a loss to himself of only twelve hundred men. La Pena speedily followed his example: the bridge of Santi Petri was again broken down.² Victor cautiously resumed his position

round the bay, where he was soon after joined by Soult returning from his victorious expedition into Estremadura; and the battle of Barrosa remained without result, save that imperishable one which arises from the confidence which it communicated to the British arms, and the glory which it gave to the British name.

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Immediate, however, as well as ultimate results, attended the retreat of Massena from his position at Santarem. Having exhausted the last means of subsistence which the country he occupied would afford, and finding his marauders at length returning on all sides empty-handed from their excursions, this veteran commander commenced his retreat. He chose for its line the valley of the Mondego, and the road to Almeida; but as this required the passage, in presence of the enemy, of the range of mountains which separates that valley from that of the Zezere, where his forces lay, by an army encumbered with an immense train of artillery, and ten thousand sick, the operation was one which required to be conducted with extreme caution. The great military talents of the hero of Aspern and Zurich here shone forth with the brightest lustre. Forming his army into a solid mass, under the constant protection of a powerful rearguard commanded by Ney, he retired slowly and deliberately, without either confusion or forced marches, and constantly availing himself of the numerous strong positions which the country afforded, to take his stand in such a manner that he required to be dislodged by a flank movement of the pursuing force, which necessarily required time, and gave opportunity for the main body and carriages to defile quietly in the rear.¹

86.
Massena's
skillful
system of
retreat.

Atlas,
Plate 48.

¹ Gurw. vii.
481. Nap.
iii. 455.
Belm. i.
165.

Two days were necessarily occupied at first by Wellington in watching the enemy, as his line of retreat was not yet declared, and he had assembled Ney's corps near Leyria, as if menacing the lines of Torres Vedras. But no sooner did it clearly appear that he had taken the valley of the Mondego, and was retiring in good earnest,

87.
Various
actions
during the
retreat.
March 8.

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March 9.

March 10.

March 12.

¹ Nap. iii.

455, 465.

Belm. i.

165, 166.

Well. Desp.

Gurw. vii.

481.

88.

Continuation of the retreat to the frontier.

than the whole allied force to the north of the Tagus was put in motion after him. The bulk of his forces was directed by Wellington on Leyria, whither also were moved the reinforcements, six thousand strong, which had recently arrived from England, in order to stop the enemy from moving on Oporto and the northern provinces of the kingdom. To gain time, the French general offered battle at Pombal, which obliged Wellington to concentrate his troops, and to bring up the two divisions which had been sent across the Tagus to relieve Badajoz. But no sooner were seven divisions united, than Massena retired, and a slight skirmish alone took place between the two armies. On the 12th, Ney, with the rearguard, stood firm at Redinha, at the mouth of a long defile, through which the main body of the army was retiring; and the splendid spectacle was exhibited of thirty thousand men marching in an open plain against this position. At their approach, however, Ney abandoned it without any considerable loss.¹

Coimbra at this period appears to have been the point towards which the French were tending; but the fortunate occupation of that town, at this juncture, by Trant's militia, and the report which, though erroneous, was believed, that the reinforcements for the British army had been forwarded by sea to the mouth of the Mondego, and had arrived there, induced Massena to change the line of his retreat, and he fell back towards Almeida by the miserable road of Miranda del Corva, along the left bank of the Mondego. Frightful ravages everywhere marked his steps: not only were the villages invariably burned, and the peasants murdered who remained in them, but the town of Leyria and convent of Alcobasa were given to the flames by express orders from the French headquarters. But these barbarities produced their usual effect of augmenting the distresses of the retreating army. The narrow road was soon blocked up by carriages and baggage waggons; confusion began

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March 14.

March 21.

¹ Well. to
Lord
Bathurst,
April 4,
1811.
Gurw. vii.
415, 435.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
197, 199.
Nap. 473,
488.89.
Action at
Sabugal,
and vast
losses during
the retreat.
April 3.

to prevail; distress and suffering were universal; and nothing but the absence of two divisions of his army, which Wellington had been obliged again to detach across the Tagus to stop the progress of Soult, and secure Elvas after the fall of Badajoz, saved the enemy from vigorous attack and total ruin. But as, after that large deduction, the retiring mass was considerably stronger than the pursuing, Wellington could not press the enemy, as he might have done had he possessed an equal force; and Massena arrived at Celorica, grievously distressed and almost destitute, but without any serious fighting, and with the loss only of a thousand stragglers. The French general was there joined by Claparède's division, nine thousand strong, of the reserve corps collected by Napoleon in Biscay; and he resolved to remain there, and still maintain the war in Portugal. Ney, however, positively refused to obey this order, alleging the necessity of retiring to Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo to give repose to the army; and to such a length did the discord between these two chiefs arise, that Massena deprived him of his command, and bestowed it on Loison.¹

The indecision of the French marshal what course to adopt, however, was soon terminated by the approach of Wellington, who came up and drove him from the new line of operations he was endeavouring to take up on Coria and Alcantara; the noble defensive position of Guarda was abandoned in confusion; and the French army again forced back on the line of the Coa, with the loss of two thousand prisoners. Reynier's position at Sabugal, when the Allied troops approached him, suggested to the English general the project of cutting him off from the remainder of the army, and compelling him to surrender. This well-designed enterprise failed in obtaining complete success, from the attack being prematurely made by the British advanced-guard before the flanking columns had come up, and the movement of the troops being somewhat perplexed by a violent storm of rain which came on,

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April 5.
¹ Vict. et
 Conq. xx.
 197, 202.
 Well. Desp.
 4th and 9th
 Apr. 1811.
 Gurw. vii.
 415, 435.
 Nap. ii. 473,
 488. Jom.
 iii. 493, 494.

90.
 Blockade of
 Almeida,
 and efforts
 of Massena
 for its relief.
 April 15.

accompanied with thick fog. As it was, however, the French, after a protracted conflict, and alternate success and defeat, were compelled to retire with the loss of one howitzer and a thousand men, including three hundred prisoners, and all Loison's baggage. On the same day, Trant destroyed three hundred of the enemy on the banks of the Agueda. These checks convinced Massena of the justice of Ney's opinion, that the army must seek for rest behind the cannon of Ciudad Rodrigo; and he therefore threw a garrison into Almeida, and retreated with the bulk of his forces across the frontier to that fortress, and thence to Salamanca. He entered Portugal with seventy thousand men; ten thousand joined him under Drouet at Santarem, and nine thousand on the retreat to the Agueda; and he brought only forty-five thousand of all arms out of the country. He lost, therefore, the enormous number of forty-five thousand men during the invasion and retreat, by want, sickness, and the sword of the enemy: while the British were not weakened to the extent of a fourth part of the number.^{1*}

Almeida was immediately invested by Wellington; and the French having retired to such a distance, and gone into cantonments on the Tormes, he deemed it safe, as he had sent, during the retreat of the French, a considerable part of his army to the south of the Tagus, under Beresford, to co-operate with the troops which had been collected there for the relief of Campo Mayor and the sieges of Olivenza and Badajoz, so as to raise their numbers to about twenty-two thousand men, to repair thither himself to conduct the operations. Napoleon, however, was resolved not to permit the English general to gain possession of the frontier fortresses without a struggle; and he transmitted peremptory orders to Massena instantly

* "The army of Portugal, grievously weakened by the losses of its long and disastrous retreat, could hardly, on re-entering Spain, muster thirty-five thousand combatants. The cavalry had only two thousand men in a condition to march: the artillery could only muster twelve pieces."—BELMAS, *Jour. des Sièges dans la Péninsule*, i. 176.

to break up from the Tormes with his own three corps, and a considerable part of Bessières' reserve, which was ordered to join him from Biscay, and attempt the relief of Almeida, which had only provisions for fourteen days. He accordingly again put his army in motion, and advanced to Ciudad Rodrigo in the end of April ; and on the 2d May crossed the Agueda at the bridge of that place, with fifty thousand men, including five thousand noble horse sent him from Bessières' corps. Wellington hastened from Elvas, where his headquarters had been established, and drew up his covering army, about thirty thousand strong, including sixteen hundred cavalry, on the summit of a vast plateau, between the Turones and the Dos Casas ; the left at Fort Conception, the centre opposite Almeida, the right at FUENTES D'ONORE, and stretching thence to Poço Velho, both of which villages were strongly occupied. The whole line was five miles in length, and the front was difficult of access, by reason of the Dos Casas flowing in a deep ravine across nearly its whole extent.¹

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April 29.

¹ Wel. Desp.
8th May
1811.
Gurw. vii.
514, and
viii. 486.
Nap. iii.
505, 509.
Belm. i. 176,
Jom. iii.
495.

No sooner had the enemy formed on the ground on the afternoon of the 3d, than they commenced a vigorous attack on the village of Fuentes d'Onore, which was occupied by five battalions. So vehement was their onset, so heavy their cannonade, that the British were forced to abandon the streets, and with difficulty maintained themselves on a craggy eminence at one end, around an old chapel. Wellington upon this reinforced the post with the 24th, 71st, and 79th regiments, which charged so vigorously down the streets that the enemy were driven out with great loss ; and these battalions occupied the village throughout the night, the French retaining only a small part of its lower extremity. On the following day Massena collected his whole army close to the British position, and made his final dispositions for the attack. The Coa, which ran along the rear of nearly the whole of Wellington's line, was in general bordered by craggy pre-

91.
First com-
bat of Fuen-
tes d'Onore.
May 3.

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cipices ; so that, if the Allied army could be thrown into confusion, their retreat appeared almost impracticable. The convoy of provisions destined for the relief of Almeida was at Gallegos, seven miles in the rear, ready to move on as soon as the road was opened. For this purpose, the grand attack was to be made upon the British right, where an entrance to the plateau, on level ground, could be found ; for the whole front of their position was covered by the rugged ravine of the Dos Casas, which separated the two armies in front, and was in most places wholly impassable for cavalry, and in some even for infantry. With this view, three divisions of infantry, twenty-four thousand strong, and nearly all the cavalry, were, late on the evening of the 4th, drawn to the extreme French left, and posted so as to attack at daybreak the British right flank, on the neck of land, about three miles broad, where the plateau on which their army rested joined the level heights between the source of the Turones and the Dos Casas. Perceiving this movement, Wellington on his part brought up his left and centre farther to the right, and posted them along the Dos Casas, from Fuentes d'Onore on the left, through Poço Velho, to the neighbourhood of Nava d'Aver on the right, where they touched Don Julian Sanchez's men.¹

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xx.
205, 207.
Belm. i.
177, 178.
Well. Desp.
8th May
1811.
Gurw. vii.
515, 517.
Nap. iii.
512, 513.

92.
Battle of
Fuentes
d'Onore.
May 5.

Early next morning the attack was commenced with great vehemence on the British right, under General Houston, near Poço Velho ; and the enemy speedily drove them out of that village. Don Julian Sanchez, who commanded a body of three thousand guerillas on the extreme British right, immediately retired across the Turones ; and Montbrun, finding the plain now open, fell with above four thousand admirable cuirassiers on the British and Portuguese horse, not twelve hundred strong. They were gallantly met and partially checked by the Allied cavalry under General Charles Stewart, who took the colonel of one of the regiments, Lamotte,

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prisoner in the *mêlée* with his own hand. But the combat was too unequal; and, after a gallant effort, the British horse were driven behind the cover of the light division and Houston's troops. Montbrun instantly swept, with his terrible cuirassiers, round the now exposed infantry. Crauford's men rapidly formed square and repelled the attack; but so swift was the French onset that, ere a similar formation could be effected by the seventh division, the shock was upon them. Though the Chasseurs Britanniques and some of the Brunswick infantry, with admirable steadiness taking advantage of a ruined wall, repelled the charge *in line*, yet some were cut down, and Captain Ramsay's troop of horse-artillery was entirely surrounded.¹ All gave them over for lost; but, after they had for a while been concealed from the view by the glancing throng of cuirassiers, an English shout was heard, and that noble officer was seen bursting through the throng, his horses bounding with their guns over the plain, and the mounted gunners in close order protecting the rear. But still the progress of the enemy in this quarter was very evident; the British right was turned and broken through, and it was apparent that, unless the ground lost could be regained, or a new defensive position defying attack taken up, the battle would be lost.²

¹ Nap. iii.
513.² Wel. Desp.
8th May
1811.Gurw. vii.
516, 517.Vict. et
Conq. xx.
208, 209.Nap. iii.
512, 513.Lond. ii.
104, 106.Belm. i.
178, 179.Jom. iii.
497.93.
Obstinate
nature of
the fight.

Wellington's position was now in the highest degree critical. In his rear were the ravines of the Turones and the Coa, extremely rugged and difficult of passage; while his right, the key of his position, commanding the entrance of the plateau, from the small body of cavalry at his disposal, was unable to make head against the enemy. In these circumstances, he took a hazardous resolution, but one which the admirable steadiness of his troops enabled him to execute with perfect success. He drew back the whole centre and right wing of his army, the left being drawn up and remaining firm at Fuentes d'Onore, as the pivot on which the backward wheel was

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performed, in order to take up a new position facing to the original right of the line, and nearly at right angles to it, on a ridge of heights which ran across the plateau, and stretched from the ravine of the Dos Casas to that of the Turones. Such a retreat, however, in the course of which the outer extremity of the line had to retire four miles over a level plateau, enveloped by a formidable and victorious cavalry, was most hazardous. The plain over which the troops were retiring was soon covered with carriages and fugitives from the camp-followers; and if any of the divisions had given way, the enemy would have burst in upon them with such forces as would have sent the disorderly multitude headlong against some of its own squares, and thrown the whole into irreparable confusion. Meanwhile a fierce contest was going on in Fuentes d'Onore, where the three victorious regiments who had held it two days before, after a gallant resistance, were pierced through, Colonel Cameron of the 71st was mortally wounded, and the lower part of the town taken.¹

¹ Wel. Desp.
Gurw. vii.
517, 518.
Nap. iii.
515. Vict.
et Cong. xx.
208, 210.
Belm. i.
178.

94.
Steady re-
treat of the
British
centre and
right.

But in that dread hour, one of the most perilous of the whole war for England, she was saved by the skill of her chief and the incomparable valour of her soldiers. Slowly, and in perfect order, the squares of the 1st, 7th, and light divisions, retired for several miles, flanked on either side by the terrible cuirassiers of Montbrun, flushed with the newly won glories of Wagram; ² pressed in rear by the columns and batteries of Ney's corps, which had broken the Russian army at Friedland.³ In vain their charging squadrons swept round these serried bands, and the light of the British bayonets was for a time lost in the blaze of the French cuirasses. From every throng the unbroken squares still emerged, pursuing their steady way amidst a terrific fire; the seventh division successfully accomplished its long semicircular sweep, crossed the Turones, and took up its ground between that stream and the Coa; ⁴ the centre of the army soon gained the ridge of

² *Ante*, ch.
lix. § 50.

³ *Ante*, ch.
xlii. § 56.

⁴ Gurw. vii.
517, 518.
Vict. et
Cong. xx.
208, 210.
Nap. iii.
515.

heights for which it was destined ; a scarlet line was seen on the summit of the steep, with frequent guns through its interstices ; while what was now the left, with invincible firmness, still made good the crags and chapel of Fuentes d'Onore. In this new position, still barring the approach to Almeida, Wellington quietly awaited the renewed attack of the enemy.

When the whole had taken up their ground, Massena recoiled from the prospect of attacking such an enemy as he had just been combating, posted in dense masses on a ridge not two miles in length, and covered on either flank by a steep ravine ; and, confining himself to a cannonade along its front, redoubled his efforts on the British left, where he sent the whole division of Drouet against the village of Fuentes d'Onore. But though the fighting was most desperate all day in that quarter, though the enemy at one period had got possession of nearly the whole village, and his skirmishers penetrated through on the other side towards the main position, the British always retained part of the houses ; and at length, when the concentration of his forces enabled Wellington to reinforce his left by fresh troops, the French were driven through the streets with great slaughter by a charge of the 71st, 79th, and 88th regiments.* On this occasion, one of the very few such in the war, the bayonets crossed, and the Imperial Guards, some of whom were lifted from the ground in the shock, and borne backward a few paces in the air,¹ were

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95.
Massena's
ultimate
failure.

¹ Gurw. vii.
517, 518.
Nap. iii.
515, 516.
Jom. iii.
496, 497.
Vict. et
Cong. xx.
208, 211.
Wel. Desp.
8th May
1811.

* The ensign who carried the colours of the 79th in this dreadful struggle was killed. The covering sergeant immediately called out, "An officer to bear the colours of the 79th !" One came forward, and was soon struck down. "An officer to bear the colours of the 79th !" again shouted the sergeant, and another hero succeeded, who was also killed. A third time, and a fourth, the sergeant called out in like manner as the bearers of the colours were successively struck down ; till at length no officer remained unwounded but the gallant adjutant, who sprang forward and seized the colours, saying, "The 79th shall never want one to carry its colours while I can stand." He bore them in safety through the glorious fight. A parallel incident occurred in ancient times : — "Quidam ante portam oppidi Gallus, qui glebas in ignem e regione turris projiciebat, scorpione ab latere dextro transfixus exanimatusque concidit. Hunc ex proximis unus jacentem transgressus eodem illo munere fungebatur.

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1811.

96.
Evacuation
of Almeida,
and Mas-
sena's re-
treat.
May 9.

forced to give ground before the Highland regiments.* Night put an end to the slaughter in this quarter; the British retained their position around the chapel and on the crags, and the French retired across the Dos Casas. Fifteen hundred men had fallen or were made prisoners on both sides, and yet neither could claim decided advantage.

Though the British lost ground on all points but the extreme left during this battle, and were certainly nearer experiencing a defeat than in any other action in Spain, yet the result proved that they had gained their object. Massena lingered three days in front of the Allied position, which Wellington strengthened with fieldworks, and rendered altogether unassailable. At length, despairing of either forcing or turning the British lines, he retreated across the Agueda, leaving Almeida to its fate; having first sent orders to the governor, General Brennier, by an intrepid soldier named Tillet, to blow up the works, and endeavour to effect his retreat through the blockading force. These directions were obeyed with surprising skill and success. At midnight on the 10th this brave man blew up the bastions, and, sallying forth, marched swiftly and bravely forward to the Barba del Puerco, which he had ascertained was the most unguarded point of the Allied line. The fourth regiment, which was ordered to occupy that point, did not receive its instructions in time; and, when it did, unfortunately missed its road in the dark.¹ The consequence was, that Brennier, with eleven hundred of his gallant followers, got clear off, and joined Massena

¹Wel. Desp.
Gur. vii.
548. Nap.
iii. 519, 522.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
212, 213.
Jom. iii.
499.

Eadem ratione ictu scorpionis exanimato altero, successit tertius, et tertio quartus; nec prius ille est a propugnatoribus vacuus relictus locus quam, restincto aggere atque omni parte submotis hostibus, finis est pugnandi factus." *CÆSAR, de Bello Gallico*, vii. 25.

* The 71st Highlanders had been quartered recently before this in Glasgow, and largely recruited in that city. When ordered to charge, their brave commander exclaimed, "Now, my lads, let us show them how we can *clear the Gallowgate*!" This allusion to a well-known street in Glasgow, where the barracks stood, was received with a shout of applause, and was immediately followed by the decisive charge which drove back the Imperial Guard.—*Personal knowledge*.

near Ciudad Rodrigo; but four hundred were killed or made prisoners in crossing the deep chasm of the Barba del Puerco. Wellington on the day following took possession of Almeida, in which the artillery was entire, but several large chasms existed in the walls. Massena withdrew to Salamanca and the banks of the Tormes, and the last act in the eventful drama of the invasion of Portugal was terminated.

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1811.

May 12.

The retreat of the French from Portugal, a model of military skill and ability on the part both of the soldiers and commanders, was disgraced by a systematic and deliberate cruelty which can never be sufficiently condemned. We have the authority of Wellington for the assertion, that "their conduct was, throughout the retreat, marked by a barbarity seldom equalled, never surpassed. Even the towns of Torres Novas, Thomar, and Pernes, in which the headquarters had been for several months, and in which the inhabitants had been invited by promises of safety to remain, were plundered, and in part destroyed, on the night the retreat began; and they have since burned every town and village through which they passed."¹ A single incident will illustrate the horrors of such a system of warfare better than any general description, and it comes from a gallant eyewitness, whose graphic powers are never called forth by mawkish sensibility, nor his indignant feelings excited by undue hostility towards his adversaries. "A large house, situated in an obscure part of the mountains, was discovered filled with starving persons. Above thirty women and children had sunk; and sitting by the bodies were fifteen or sixteen survivors, of whom only one was a man, but all so enfeebled as to be unable to eat the little food which we had to offer them. The youngest had fallen first; all the children were dead: none were emaciated in the bodies, but the muscles of the face were invariably drawn transversely, giving the appearance of laughing, and presenting the most ghastly sight imaginable."² The men seemed most

97.
Barbarous
conduct of
the French
during the
retreat.

¹ Wel. Desp.
March 14,
1811. Gur.
vii. 348.

² Nap. iii.
457.

CHAP.
LXIII.

1811.

98.
Reflections
on these
shocking
barbarities.

eager for life; the women appeared patient and resigned; and even in this distress had arranged the bodies of those who first died, with decency and care."

Such is ambition in its most terrible form; such the result of the atrocious system which, under the specious pretence of making war support war, consigns the innocent inhabitants of invaded countries, old men, women, and children, to ineffable misery, starvation, and death. Doubtless such horrors have in every age attended serious and long-continued hostility, and they are sometimes unavoidable where great bodies of men, inflamed by violent passions, are brought into collision. But it is the peculiar and characteristic disgrace of the French Revolutionary armies, that they were not merely permitted, but *enjoined* by the commanders; and that those atrocities which in other armies spring from the license or brutality of the soldiers, and which the officers labour assiduously to prevent, were with them systematically acted upon by all ranks, and flowed from the system which, impressed upon the generals by the rapacity of government, was by them reduced to a regular form, and enjoined in general orders emanating from headquarters. "The convent of Alcobasa," says Wellington, "was burned by orders from the French headquarters. The bishop's palace, and the whole town of Leyria, where General Drouet had his headquarters, shared the same fate; and there is not an inhabitant of the country, of any class or description, who has had any communication or dealing with the French army, who has not had reason to repent of it."¹

¹ Well. to Lord Liverpool, 14th March 1811, Gur. vii. 188, 196, 348.

99.
Noble qualities evinced by the Portuguese peasantry.

But these unheard-of atrocities, thus communicated to vast armies by a regular system of plunder, and exercised on a great scale in every part of Europe, were at length producing their natural effects. Unspeakable was the indignation excited in the Portuguese peasantry by such revolting cruelties; and although the inefficiency and desire for popularity in the regency at Lisbon for long

paralysed the efforts of the country, and rendered in some degree unavailing the ardent spirit of the people, yet the most perfect unanimity prevailed among the rural inhabitants, and the British were supported in their enterprises by the peasantry with a cordiality and fidelity which were honourable alike to both nations. Wellington has told us, that in no single instance were the humbler ranks in Portugal discovered in any correspondence with the enemy; that the prisoners, though in some instances obliged to join the French ranks, all deserted on the first opportunity to the standard of their country; that the Portuguese peasants, though of such different habits, agreed admirably with the English soldiers; and that, though great numbers of crimes were committed, especially at first, by the disorderly Irish, who formed so large a part of many regiments newly sent out, yet it was next to impossible to get the natives who had suffered to come forward and give evidence against them. These are truly noble traits in national character, and, combined with the heroic stand which, under British guidance, they made against their tremendous enemy, despite all the weakness and imbecility of their rulers, prove that materials for greatness exist in the Peninsula, if the time shall ever arrive when the spirit and energy of the higher ranks, then altogether wanting, shall equal the courage and virtue of the people.¹

¹ Wel. Desp.
Gur. vi. 105,
520; and
viii. 165.

Nor were these noble qualities in the Portuguese peasantry even then without their reward. Their bravery and their suffering excited the warmest sympathy in Great Britain; the enthusiasm of all classes, ever readily awakened in the cause of woe, was roused to the highest pitch. A grant of a hundred thousand pounds by parliament, to the sufferers by the French invasion, was passed without a single dissentient voice in the House of Commons; private subscriptions in every town and village of the empire soon trebled its amount;² and the

100.
Grant by
parliament,
and sub-
scriptions
in England
for their
relief.
Feb. 24.

² Ann. Reg.
1811, 37.
Parl. Deb.
xix. 447,
462.

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1811.

noblest qualities in our nature, patriotism and charity, excited by the heart-stirring course of events to the very highest pitch, poured forth from two perennial fountains a stream of mingled energy and benevolence which was, and deserved to be, invincible.

101.
Vast effect
produced by
this cam-
paign over
Europe.

Immense was the effect produced by the glorious termination of the war in Portugal, on the British nation and the whole of Europe. The French armies had at length been brought to a stand ; and that apparently irresistible torrent of conquest, which had hitherto flowed over the whole of Europe, was now to all appearance permanently arrested. Experience had proved, that, by combining military discipline and regular forces with vast exertions and patriotic enthusiasm, a barrier could be opposed to revolutionary aggression. The failure of Austria, in her late heroic attempt, was forgotten in the still more recent triumph of England : Russia, contemplating a similar attack upon her own independence, watched with intense anxiety the interesting struggle, and beheld, in the defensive system and triumph of Wellington, both the model on which her defensive preparations should be formed, and the best grounds to hope for a successful issue from her own exertions. But the effect produced in England was still greater, and if possible more important. Proportioned to the breathless suspense in which the nation had been kept by the advance of Massena, and the confident predictions of immediate success with which it had been preceded, from many in the British islands and all on the Continent, was the universal joy which prevailed when the prospect of unlooked-for success began at last to dawn upon the nation.

102.
And espe-
cially in
Great Bri-
tain.

The battle of Busaco first flashed through the gloom of general despondence, occasioned by the retreat of Wellington into the interior of Portugal. Ere long, however, its cheering light faded, and the public mind was more violently agitated than ever, when, after such

a triumph, the retreat was still continued to the close vicinity of Lisbon. But when Wellington at last took his stand, and through the thick clouds with which the horizon was beset, the lines of Torres Vedras were dimly seen rising in stupendous and impregnable strength, the general enthusiasm knew no bounds. The advantages of the British position, hitherto altogether unknown save to its chief, were at once revealed. It was seen that England possessed an unconquerable stronghold in which she might securely place her resources, where her armies, how numerous soever, would be amply provided for by her fleets; while the forces of Napoleon, however great, would either fall at the foot of the intrenchments, or perish of famine in the desert which they had created around them. The profound observation of Henry IV., "If you make war in Spain with a small army, you are beaten; with a large one, you are starved," arose in vivid importance to their recollection; and the nation ceased to despair in a contest, in which the very magnitude of the enemy's force had at length been turned with decisive effect against him. Unbounded was the admiration now justly conceived for Wellington, whose foresight had provided this triumph, and whose fortitude had withstood the obloquy necessary to be encountered ere it could be attained.¹

¹ Wel. Desp.
viii. 76, 77.

"Tu, Maximus, ille es
Unus qui nobis cunctando restituis rem."

* * * * *

"Non ponebat enim rumores ante salutem;
Ergo postque, magisque viri nunc gloria staret." *

Æneid, vi. 846; and ENNIUS.

There can be no doubt that the simultaneous invasion of Andalusia and Portugal, in a military point of view, was a capital error on the part of Napoleon. It was

* "And thou, great hero, greatest of thy name,
Ordained in war to save the sinking state,
And by delays to put a stop to fate."

DRYDEN.

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LXIII.

1811.

103.

Error of Na-
poleon in
the cam-
paign, and
its cause.

a direct deviation from his own principle, of bringing all the disposable force to bear upon the decisive point. The line of the Tagus was the quarter where the decisive blow was to be struck. If Soult, with sixty thousand men, had invaded the Alentejo at the same time that Massena, with eighty thousand, poured down the valley of the Mondego, it is extremely doubtful whether even the strength of Torres Vedras could have enabled Wellington to maintain his ground at Lisbon. No one knew better than the French Emperor that the passage of the Sierra Morena was an eccentric movement, which strengthened the enemy's chances of success at the vital point; but he was driven to adopt it by the political necessities of his situation, and the impossibility of raising adequate supplies from the countries which his monstrous exactions had ruined. France could not, with safety, be more heavily taxed; the central provinces of Spain were utterly exhausted; fresh resources were indispensable; and the simultaneous invasion of Andalusia and Portugal was resorted to in the prospect of securing the spoils of these hitherto untouched fields. Crime and oppression may for long prove victorious, but they bear along with them the seeds of their ultimate punishment, and they are constrained to bring those seeds to maturity by the efforts which they make for their own advancement.¹

¹ Wel. Desp.
vii. 286.

104.

Views of
the British
government
on the cam-
paign.

Government at home were far from being equally impressed with Wellington, during the progress of the campaign, with the chances of ultimate success. They were not aware of the vast strength of the Torres Vedras position; and although they sent out all the succours which he demanded, yet they did so rather in deference to his wishes, and from respect to his opinion of the probabilities of success, than from any belief of their own that his anticipations were well founded. When he drew near to Lisbon, their anxiety was very great; and it was well known that, for a considerable time, they

expected that every arrival from that capital would bring the account of his embarkation. Yet, even in that contemplated extremity, they did not despair of the contest; they provided a vast fleet of ships of the line and transports, capable of bringing off the British and Portuguese army, with a great number of the inhabitants who were implicated in the war; and gave orders to their general, that if he was driven from Lisbon he should take refuge in Cadiz, and renew the war in Andalusia, from the basis of that city and Gibraltar.¹

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LXIII.

1811.

¹ Wel. Desp.
Aug. 2,
1810. Gur.
vii. 300.

This resolution was worthy of the highest admiration; it rivals the noblest instances of Roman constancy, and should make us overlook many previous instances of insensibility to the right mode of carrying on the contest, which had arisen from their long inexperience in military combination. And although we, judging with all the advantages of subsequent experience, may occasionally feel surprised at the gloomy feelings which at times pervaded both government and the nation when the dawn of European deliverance was beginning to appear behind the hills of Torres Vedras, yet it cannot be denied that, judging from past events, both had too good grounds for their prognostications. Recollecting in what disaster all previous expeditions to the Continent had terminated, when engaged only with a part of Napoleon's force, there was little room for hope now that they were assailed by the whole. But from the generality of, and the apparently solid ground for this opinion, is to drawn the brightest eulogium on the unshaken determination of the chief, which never faltered in the contest, and the clearest proof of the loftiness of the intellect which could discern through the gloom the shadow of coming events, and find in its own strength the means of their accomplishment.

105.
Their noble
resolution
to prolong
the contest
if driven
from Lis-
bon.

Those, whether in public or private life, who take expedience for the principle of their conduct, are often

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LXIII.

1811.

106.
Magnanimous principles by which Wellington was guided.

sadly perplexed what course to adopt, because, in the complicated maze of human events, they cannot see clearly to what end its conclusions point. Those who take duty for their guide, are never at a loss, because its dictates are clear, and wholly independent of the changes of fortune. Ordinary observers too often judge of the future by the past, and act on the principle that subsequent events are to be exactly similar to those which have preceded them. It belongs to the highest class of intellect to combine with the experience of the past the observation of the present; to perceive that human events are indeed governed in all ages by the same principles, but that new elements of power are perpetually rising into operation; and that, in every state of human affairs, an under-current is flowing in an opposite direction from that on the surface, bringing salvation to the miserable, and often destined to confound the anticipations of the prosperous. Wellington possessed both the moral principle and the intellectual power requisite for the leader of such a contest as that in which he was now engaged.

107.
The steady discharge of duty was his ruling principle.

Alike fearless of danger, and unmoved by obloquy, he looked merely to the discharge of duty. Undismayed by the fall of Austria and Russia, he still did not despair of the cause of European freedom, and, with comparatively inconsiderable resources, prepared, in a corner of Portugal, the means of hurling back an enemy who had at his command two hundred and fifty thousand disposable soldiers in the Peninsula. He saw that force originally had drawn forth the powers of the French Revolution, that force had sustained its growth, but that force was now undermining its foundation; and that the power which was based on the misery of every people among whom it penetrated, could not fail of being at length overcome, if combated by an energy equal to its own, accompanied by a forbearance commensurate to its rapacity. Strenuously urging, therefore, upon all the

execution of duty, he as scrupulously abstained from the abuses of power: his efforts to repel the enemy were not greater than those he made to control the license and restrain the disorders of his own army. He preferred a small force, regulated by order and maintained by justice, to a great one elevated on the fruits of rapine. He thus succeeded in at last combating the Revolution with its own weapons, and at the same time detaching from them the moral weakness under which it laboured. He met it with its own forces, but he rested their efforts on a nobler principle. France had conquered Europe by assailing virtue with the powers of intellect, guided by the fire of genius, and stimulated by the passions of wickedness. Wellington conquered France by raising against it the resources of wisdom, sustained by the constancy of duty and directed by the principles of virtue.

CHAPTER LXIV.

DOMESTIC HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN FROM 1809 TO 1812.

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1810.
1.
Vast im-
portance
and inte-
rest of the
reign of
George III.

THE reign of George III. embraces, beyond all question, the most eventful and important period in the annals of mankind. Whether we regard the changes in society, and in the aspect of the world, which occurred during its continuance, or the illustrious men who arose in Great Britain and the adjoining states during its progress, it must ever form an era of unexampled interest. Its commencement was coeval with the glories of the Seven Years' War, and the formation, on a solid basis, of the vast colonial empire of Great Britain; its meridian witnessed the momentous conflict for American independence, and the growth, amidst Transatlantic wilds, of European civilisation; its latter days were involved in the heart-stirring conflicts of the French Revolution, and immortalised by the military exploits of Napoleon. The transition from the opening of this reign to its termination, is not merely that from one century to the next, but from one age of the world to another. New elements of fearful energy were brought into operation in the moral world during its continuance, and new principles for the government of mankind established, never again to be shaken. The civilisation of a new world, in this age, was contemporary with the establishment of new principles for the government of the old. In its eventful days were combined the growth of Grecian democracy

with the passions of Roman ambition; the fervour of plebeian zeal with the pride of aristocratic power; the blood of Marius with the genius of Cæsar; the opening of a hemisphere equal to that which rewarded the enterprise of Columbus, with the rise of a social agent, in the powers of steam, as mighty as the press.

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1810.

But if new elements were called into action in the social world, of surpassing strength and energy, in the course of this memorable reign, still more remarkable were the characters which rose to eminence during its continuance. The military genius, unconquerable courage, and enduring constancy of Frederick; the ardent mind, burning eloquence, and lofty patriotism of Chatham; the incorruptible integrity, sagacious intellect, and philosophic spirit of Franklin; the disinterested virtue, prophetic wisdom, and imperturbable fortitude of Washington; the masculine understanding, feminine passions, and blood-stained ambition of Catherine, would alone have been sufficient to have given this era, for good or for evil, immortality. But bright as was its commencement, its first lustre was as nothing to that which subsequently appeared. Then were to be seen the rival minds of Pitt and Fox, which, emblematic of the antagonist powers which then convulsed mankind, shook the British senate by their vehemence, and roused the spirit destined ere long, on behalf of the dearest interests of humanity, to array the world in arms: then the great soul of Burke cast off the unworthy fetters of ambition or party, and, fraught with a giant's force and a prophet's wisdom, regained its place in the cause of mankind: then the arm of Nelson cast its thunderbolts on every shore, and preserved unscathed in the deep the ark of European freedom; and, ere the reign expired, the wisdom of Wellington had erected an impassable barrier to Gallic ambition, and said even to the deluge of imperial power, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." Nor were splendid genius, heroic

2.
Great characters which were grouped around the throne of George III.

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LXIV.

1810.

3.
Its character
as regards
the illustrious and
literary
men who
flourished
during it.

virtue, gigantic wickedness, wanting on the opposite side of this heart-stirring conflict. Mirabeau had thrown over the morning of the French Revolution the brilliant but deceitful light of democratic genius : Danton had coloured its noon with the passions and the energy of tribunitian power : Carnot had exhibited the combination, rare in a corrupted age, of republican energy with private virtue : Robespierre had darkened its evening by the blood and agony of fanatical ambition : Napoleon had risen like a meteor over its night, dazzled the world by the brightness of his genius and the lustre of his deeds, and lured its votaries, by the deceitful blaze of glory, to perdition.

In calmer pursuits, in the tranquil walks of science and literature, the same age was, beyond all others, fruitful in illustrious men. Dr Johnson, the strongest intellect and the most profound observer of the eighteenth century : Gibbon, the architect of a bridge over the dark gulf which separates ancient from modern times, whose vivid genius has tinged with brilliant colours the greatest historical work in existence : Hume, whose simple but profound history will be coeval with the long and eventful thread of English story : Robertson, who first threw over the maze of human events the light of philosophic genius, and the spirit of enlightened reflection : Gray, whose burning thoughts have been condensed in words of more than classic beauty : Burns, whose lofty soul spread its own pathos and dignity over the “short and simple annals of the poor :” Smith, who called into existence a new science, intimately connected with the dearest interests of humanity, and unfolded many of its principles in a single lifetime : Reid, who carried into the recesses of the human mind the torch of reason : Stewart, who cast a luminous glance over the philosophy of mind, and warmed the inmost recesses of metaphysical inquiry by the delicacy of taste and the glow of eloquence : Watt, who added an unknown power to the resources of art, and in the regulated force of steam discovered the means of approximating the most

distant parts of the earth :—such names and achievements as these have rendered this period one for ever memorable in the annals of scientific acquisition and literary greatness.

But when the stormy day of revolution commenced, and the passions were excited by political convulsion, the human mind took a different direction ; and these names, great as they are, were rivalled by others of a wider range and a bolder character. Scott then entranced the world by the creations of fancy ; and, diving deep into the human heart, clothed alike the manners of chivalry and the simplicity of the cottage with the colours of poetry, the glow of patriotism, and the dignity of virtue. Byron burst the barriers of wealth and fashion ; and, reviving in an artificial age the fire of passion, the thrill of excitement, and the charm of pathos, awakened in many a breast, long alive only to corrupted pleasures, the warmth of pity and the glow of admiration.* Campbell infused the visions of hope and the fervour of philanthropy, with the sublimity of poetic thought and the energy of lyrical expression ; and, striking deep into the human heart, alone of all the poets of the age, has, like Shakspeare and Milton, transplanted his own thought and expression into the ordinary language of the people. Southey, embracing the world in his grasp, arrayed the heroism of duty, and the constancy of virtue, with the magnificence of Eastern imagination and the strains of inspired poetry : while the genius of Moore, casting off the unworthy associations of its earlier years, fled back to its native regions of the sun, and blended the sentiment and elevation of the West with the charms of Oriental imagery and the brilliancy of Asiatic thought.

But the genius of these men, great and immortal as it

4.
When the
French Re-
volution
arose.

* It is only, however, to his descriptions of nature, and a few of his reflections, that this high praise is due. Generally speaking, his sentiments and characters exhibit a chaos of ill-regulated passion, which never will be intelligible or interesting but to the spoiled children of fashion or self-indulgence—that is, to a limited portion of mankind.

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LXIV.

1810.

5.
Religious
character
which at
length char-
acterised the
period.

was, did not arrive at the bottom of things. They shared in the animation of passing events, and were roused by the storm which shook the world ; but they did not reach the secret caves whence the whirlwind issued, nor perceive what spirit had let loose the tempest upon the earth. In the bosom of retirement, in the recesses of solitary thought, the awful source was discovered, and the Æolus stood forth revealed in the original Antagonist Power of wickedness. The thought of Coleridge, even during the whirl of passing events, discovered their hidden springs, and poured forth, in an obscure style, and to an unheeding age, the great moral truths which were then being proclaimed in characters of fire to mankind. Wordsworth, profound and contemplative, clothed the lessons of wisdom in the simplicity of immortal verse. Mackintosh, rising like Burke, in maturer years, above the generous delusions of his yet inexperienced life, wanted only greater industry, and a happy exemption from London society, to have rivalled Thucydides in the depth of his views, and a biographer like Boswell, to have equalled Johnson in the fame of his conversation : while Chalmers, bringing to the cause of truth and the interests of humanity a prophet's fire and an orator's genius, discerned in the indifferent or irreligious spirit of the former age the real cause of the dangers of the present ; and in the spread of Christian instruction, and the prevalence of religious principle, the only power that ever has successfully combated, or ever will do so, either in political or social evils, the seductions of passion, the delusions of error, and the powers of wickedness.

6.
Brilliant
character of
this period.

The French and German writers, justly proud of the literary fame of their own countries during this memorable reign, will hardly allow that their illustrious authors should be grouped around the throne of George III. ; and will point rather to the Revolution, the empire of Napoleon, or the War of Independence, as marking the period on continental Europe. But by whatever name it

is called, the era is the same ; and if we detach ourselves for a moment from the rivalry of nations, and anticipate the time in future days when Europe presents itself to the rest of the world as a luminous spot, exceeding even Greece in lustre, and from whence the blessings of civilisation and the light of religion ray out over the globe, we shall feel reason to be astonished at the brightness of the light which then shone forth in the world. It is pleasing to dwell on the contemplation. As with the age of Pericles in Grecian, or of Augustus in Roman story, it will never again be equalled in European history ; but the most distant ages will dwell upon it with rapture, and by its genius the remotest generations of mankind will be blessed.

In no age of the world has the degrading effect of long-continued prosperity, and the regenerating influence of difficulty and suffering on human thought, been more clearly evinced. The latter part of the eighteenth century, the reigns of Louis XV., the Regent Orleans, and Louis XVI., had been characterised by a flood of selfishness and corruption, the sure forerunners in the annals of nations of external disaster or internal ruin. Fancy was applied only to give variety to the passions—genius to inflame, by the intermixture of sentiment, the seductions of the senses—talent to assail the Creator from whom it sprang. The great powers of Voltaire, capable, as his tragedies demonstrate, of the most exalted as well as varied efforts, were perverted by the spirit of the age in which he lived. He wrote for individual celebrity, not for eternal truth ; and he obtained, in consequence, the natural reward of such conduct—unbounded present fame, and in some respects undeserved permanent neglect.* The ardent and more elevated, but unsteady mind of

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7.
Degraded
moral char-
acter of
French
literature
at the com-
mencement
of the
period.

* Every bookseller in France and England will now bear testimony to the fact, that there is no voluminous writer whose works remain so dead a stock as those of Voltaire ; and this is decisively proved by the extremely low price which the numerous editions of his writings bear. His tragedies are noble efforts of genius, and will live for ever ; but his romances have already descen-

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1810.

Rousseau disdained such degrading bondage. The bow, bent too far one way, recoiled too far another ; and the votaries of fashion, in an artificial age and a corrupted capital, were roused by the eloquent declamations of the recluse of Meillerie on the pristine equality of mankind, the social contract, and the original dignity of the savage character. Raynal, deducing the principles of humanity from the wrong source, traced with persuasive fervour, but with no prophetic foresight, the establishment of the Europeans in the two hemispheres ; and, blind to the mighty change which it was ordained to effect in the condition of the species, sought to deduce from the commencement of the causes ordained to spread the Christian faith over the wilderness of nature, arguments against its celestial origin.

8.
Selfishness
was the gan-
grene which
had tainted
it.

Every department of thought save one was tainted by the general wickedness, and the blindness to all but present objects, which prevailed. Man's connexion with his Maker was broken off by the French apostles of freedom ; for they declared there was no God in whom to trust in the great struggle for liberty. "Human immortality," says Channing, "that truth which is the seed of all greatness, they derided. To their philosophy man was a creature of chance, a compound of matter, a worm soon to rot and perish for ever. France failed in her attempts for freedom, through the want of that moral preparation for the exercise of its powers, without which its blessings cannot be secured. Liberty was tainted by their touch, polluted by their breath ; and yet we trusted it was to rise in health and glory from their embrace."¹ In the exact sciences alone, dependent upon intellect only, the native dignity of the human mind was asserted ; and the names of d'Alembert, Lagrange, and Laplace,

¹ Character
of Napo-
leon.

ded to the vault of all the Capulets. His historical works, compared with those in France which followed the Revolution, appear lifeless and uninteresting. His sceptical dogmas, so far from being regarded as the speculations of a powerful mind in advance, are now seen to have been the blindness of a deluded one in rear, of the momentous age to which his later years were prolonged.

will remain to the end of the world, among those who, in the loftiest subjects of purely intellectual inquiry, have extended and enlarged the boundaries of knowledge.

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LXIV.

1810.

But more animating times were approaching. Corruption had produced its inevitable fruits ; and adversity, with its renovating influence, was about to pass over the world. The Revolution came, with its disasters and its passions ; its overthrow of thrones and destruction of altars ; its woes, its blood, and its suffering. In the general deluge thus suddenly falling on a sinful world, the mass of mankind in all ranks still clung to their former vices. They were, as of old, marrying and giving in marriage, when the waters burst upon them. But the ark of salvation had been prepared by more than mortal hands. The handwriting on the wall was perceived by the gifted few to whom Providence had unlocked the fountains of original thought ; and in the highest class of intellect was soon to be discerned the elevating influence of trial and suffering upon the human mind. While the innumerable votaries of revolution, borne along on the fetid stream which had burst from the corruptions of previous manners, were bending before the altar of reason, Chateaubriand ventured to raise again, amidst the sneers of an infidel age, the standard of the ancient faith ; and devoted the energies of an intrepid, and the genius of an ardent mind, to demonstrate its relation to all that is beautiful, and great, and elevating, both in the moral and material world. Madame de Staël, albeit nursed in the atmosphere of philanthropic delusion, and bred up with filial piety at the feet of Gamaliel, arose, amidst the tears of humanity, to nobler principles ; combined the refinements of sentiment with the warmth of eloquence and the delicacy of taste, and first announced, in a philosophic survey of human affairs, the all-important truth, that there are but two eras in the history of the species—that which preceded and that which followed the establishment of Christianity.

9.
Influence of
the French
Revolution
on general
thought in
France.

CHAP.
LXIV.1810.
10.Subsequent
improve-
ment origi-
nating in
suffering.

Seeds, whether for good or evil, sown in the human mind, generally take half a century to bring their fruit to maturity ; and in the general profligacy and irreligion of the urban population in France since the Revolution, is to be discerned the havoc prepared by the labours of Voltaire and the Encyclopædists, and the long-continued corruption of previous literature. But the nobler fruits of the suffering of the Revolution are already apparent in the highest class of intellect, whence change, whether for good or evil, ever originates. Guizot has brought to the history of civilisation the light of true philosophy and the glow of enlightened religion. Cousin, in the midst of philanthropic labour and vast information on the vital question of education, has arrived at the eternal truth, that general instruction, if not based on Christian principle, is rather hurtful than beneficial, because it opens new avenues to moral corruption, without providing the only antidote which experience has proved to be effectual in correcting it. Lamartine, gifted at once with an orator's fervour and a poet's fire, has traced in strains of almost redundant beauty the steps of an enlightened European pilgrim to the birthplace of our religion and the cradle of our race, and the deluded efforts of Girondist ambition in overturning monarchy in France. May the seeds scattered by these illustrious men not fall on a barren soil and perish by the way-side, nor yet be choked amidst briars ; but bring forth good fruit, in some fifty, in some eighty, and in some an hundred fold !*

Germany is a younger branch of the same illustrious

* Sir James Mackintosh, thirty years ago, noted this remarkable change in French literature, and deplored that it had not then made its appearance amongst English writers :—"Twenty years ago," says he, "the state of opinion seemed to indicate an almost total destruction of religion in Europe. Ten years ago, the state of political events appeared to show a more advanced stage in the progress towards such a destruction. The reaction has begun everywhere. A mystical spirit prevails in Germany ; a poetical religion is patronised by men of genius in France. It is adopted in some measure by Madame de Stael, who finds it, even by the help of her reason, in the nature of man, if she cannot so deeply perceive it in the nature of things. In England no traces

family ; but from the time that her language has been cultivated by native writers, she has advanced in the great race of mind with extraordinary rapidity. Last of the European surface to be turned up by the labours of the husbandman, her soil has been found to teem with the richness of a virgin mould, and to exhibit the sparkling of hitherto untouched treasures. In reading the recent poets and great prose writers of that country, we feel as if we had arrived at a new mine of intellectual wealth ; the Gothic nations, with fresh ideas and powerful expression, have again regenerated the almost exhausted world of thought ; the giants of the North have indeed burst in and improved the puny breed. However it may be explained, the fact is sufficiently proved by the most cursory survey of the history of mankind, that the human mind is never quiescent ; that it frequently lies fallow, as it were, for a long succession of ages ; but that, during such periods, former error is forgotten, ancient chains worn off, and the seed of new and original ideas brought into existence. Original thought is never so powerful, and important truth never so clearly revealed, as when the light of day is first let in to hitherto unexplored regions of the mind. The ages of Bacon and Shakspeare in England ; of Dante and Leonardo da Vinci in Italy : of Pascal and Descartes in France, are sufficient to demonstrate the general justice of this proposition.

Long illustrious in the walks of philosophy, holding for centuries a distinguished place in the republic of science ; the birthplace of printing and gunpowder, the two most

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LXIV.

1810.

11.

Literature
of Germany
during the
same period.

of this tendency are discoverable among men of letters—perhaps because they never went so near the opposite extreme, *perhaps, also, because they have not suffered from the same misfortunes.*—MACKINTOSH'S *Memoirs*, i. 408. What a curious and instructive passage to be written thirty years ago, midway between the experience of the French and the commencement of the English revolution ! The days of anxiety, contest, and suffering have come to England, from the effects of that very organic change in which Sir James Mackintosh himself, in his later days, against his better judgment, was led to concur ; and, with them, the resurrection of the religious spirit in the works of philosophy, literature, and philanthropy, of the want of which he was then led to complain.

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 LXIV.

 1810.
 12.
 Great poets
 of Germany.

powerful agents in the cause of freedom ever communicated to mankind ;* the country of Kepler, of Euler and Leibnitz, Germany had not till the last half century explored the riches of her own tongue, or developed in native literature the novel and fervent ideas which had long been working in her bosom. But this was at length done ; and her literature started at once into life with the vigour of youthful energy, and the strength of an armed man. Klopstock, obscure but sublime, poured forth the spirit of mystical Christianity in touching and immortal strains. Goethe, simple yet profound, blended the depth of philosophical thought with the simplicity of childish affection ; and, striking with almost inspired felicity the chord of native reflection, produced that mingled flood of poetic meditation and individual observation, which has rendered his fame unbounded in the Fatherland. Wieland, without the religious fervour of the first of these writers, or the deep reflection of the second, has charmed every imagination by the brightness of his fancy, the richness of his language, and the sparkling freshness which he has thrown over all the subjects which his pen has touched. Schiller, uniting the ardour of a soldier to the soul of a statesman and the hand of a historian, has portrayed the shades of former times with dramatic power, and in a noble spirit : while the soul of Körner, awakened by the trumpet of Germany's deliverance, has poured a hero's soul and a patriot's heart into lyric verse, which will endure as long as the memory of the struggle by which it was inspired.

13.
 Her prose
 writers.

Nor have the efforts of thought in the Fatherland been confined to poetic effusion : in the calmer walks of philosophy and literature, the vigour of the human mind has been equally conspicuous ; and a new light has been already thrown, alike on present speculation and past

* Of printing, this will be generally admitted ; of gunpowder, at present, as generally denied. This is not the place to demonstrate the proposition : the experience of a few generations will place it beyond a doubt.

events, by the mingled originality and perseverance of the German character. Niebuhr, uniting to the prodigious industry of the German scholar an instinctive sagacity in discerning truth and apprehending the real springs and state of far-distant events, which is perhaps unrivalled, has thrown a new and important light on the earlier period of the Roman annals. Though his history, generally obscure, sometimes perplexed, and too often overloaded with insignificant details, can never rival in general popularity the heart-stirring legends to which the page of Livy has given immortality, yet his profound observation and marvellous penetration have rendered his work the most valuable contribution to the stores of ancient knowledge which modern times have produced. Heeren, not perhaps with equal learning or knowledge, has thrown a clearer if not a more original light over the general history of ancient nations; and demonstrated how much remains still to be done on subjects apparently exhausted by previous industry, when the vigour of real talent and the force of an original mind are applied to their elucidation. The peculiar turn of the German intellect, abstract, contemplative, and often visionary, appears in the writings of Kant; and the reader, in toiling through his obscure pages, cannot but feel both what a flood of new ideas has been poured into the world of thought by the Gothic race, and how much their importance has been diminished by being turned into the realms of ideal contemplation, instead of being devoted to objects of real usefulness.

Perhaps future ages, in comparing the philosophy and literature of England with that of Germany and France, at the commencement of the nineteenth century, will regret that the first has, especially in later times, so exclusively devoted its energies to objects of physical utility, practical importance, or ephemeral amusement, to the neglect of those higher and more lasting purposes which spring from the elevation of national feeling and

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LXIV.

1810.

14.
What if the
literature of
England,
France, and
Germany
had been
combined?

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1810.

the purity of national thought : that the direction of the second, cramped by the despotic nature of almost all the governments in the empire, has been so strongly directed to abstract speculation, imaginary feeling, or visionary perfection, to the neglect of those more heart-stirring and momentous topics which bear directly on the wellbeing of society, or the amelioration of the human race : and that the genius of the last, still perverted, save in a few gifted spirits, by the sins and depravity of the Revolution, has been so much lost in the wildness of extravagant fancy, or blinded by the passions of disappointed ambition. And, if we could conceive an era in which the freshness of German thought and the power of German expression, united to the acuteness of French observation and the clearness of French arrangement, were directed by the solidity of English judgment and the sway of English religion, it would probably be the brightest which has ever yet dawned upon the human race.

15.
Public du-
ties to which
George III.
was called.

Inferior to many, perhaps all of the illustrious men whose names have been mentioned, in intellectual power or literary acquisition, GEORGE III. will yield to none in the importance of the duties to which he was called, or the enduring benefits which he conferred upon the human race. His it was to moderate the fervour which burst forth in the world ; to restrain within due bounds the sacred fire which was to regenerate mankind, and prevent the expansive power destined to spread through the wilderness of nature the power of European art, and the blessings of Christian civilisation, from being wasted in pernicious attempts, or converted into the frightful sources of explosion and ruin. Vain are all the forces bequeathed to man, if the means of governing them are not at the same time bestowed. The power of steam was known for six thousand years ; but it was applied to no useful purpose till the genius of Watt discovered the secret of regulating it : the force of the wind produces only shipwreck and devastation, if the steady hand of the pilot is

wanting to direct the impulse which it communicates to the vessel. It was the fate of George III. to be called to the throne of the only free empire in existence during the age of revolutions ; to be destined to govern the vast and unwieldy fabric of the British dominions, when torn at one period by internal convulsion, and menaced at another by external subjugation ; to be doomed to combat, from the commencement to the end of a reign extending over more than half a century, the revolutionary spirit, veiled at one period under the guise of liberality and philanthropy, flaming at another with the passions and the terrors of a burning world.

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LXIV.

1810.

Of the incalculable importance of directing the government of such a country at such a period, with the steady hand of patriotic wisdom, we may form some estimate from observing what had been the consequences of the bursting forth of similar passions at the same time, in other states, where a corresponding regulating power was wanting, and where democracy, through the infatuation of the higher orders, and the delusion of the throne, obtained an early and a lasting triumph. France exhibited the prodigy of a monarch yielding to the wishes, and a nobility impregnated from the very first with the passions of the people ; and in the horrors of the Revolution, the devastation and subjugation of Europe, and the general ultimate extinction of all moral principle, and every element of freedom within its bounds, is to be found an awful example of the consequences of admitting such a power to act unrestrained on human affairs. Republican feelings, sobered by English habits, and directed by English principle, gained a glorious triumph in America ; and the fabric of Transatlantic independence was laid with a moderation and wisdom unparalleled in the previous annals of the world. But subsequent events have given no countenance to the belief that such institutions can, in a lasting manner, confer the blessings of freedom on mankind ; and have rather suggested the painful doubt, whether the sway of a numerical majority, at

16.
Consequences
which have
ensued
where a
similar
check did
not exist.

CHAP.
LXIV.

1810.

17.
Contrast
which the
state of
England
exhibits.

once tyrannical at home and weak abroad, may not become productive of intrigues as general, and insecurity as fatal as the worst oppression of despotic states.

Placed midway between these two great examples of democratic triumph, England still exhibits, though with diminished lustre, the rare combination of popular energy with aristocratic foresight. She is neither trampled under the hoofs of a tyrant majority, nor crushed by the weight of military power; her youth have not been mowed down by the scythe of revolutionary ambition, nor her renown tarnished, save of late years, by the vacillation of multitudinous rule. Gratefully acknowledging the influence, in the continuance of those blessings, which is to be ascribed to the prevalence of religious feeling, the moderation of general opinion, and the habits of a free constitution, it would be unjust not to give its due weight to the personal character of the monarch who swayed the English sceptre when the conflagration burst forth, and the advisers whom it led him to place about the throne. And if any doubt could exist on the subject, we have only to look to 1831, and reflect what would have been the fate of the cause of freedom throughout the world, if, when France was convulsed by the passions of Jacobin ambition, England had been blinded by the delusion of the Reform mania, and surrendered to the guidance of a conceding monarch.

18.
Character of
George III.

Although neither the intellectual powers nor mental cultivation of George III. were of a high order, yet no monarch was ever better adapted for the arduous and momentous duty to which he was called, or possessed qualities more peculiarly fitted for the difficulties with which, during his long reign, he had to contend. Born and bred in England, he gloried, as he himself said, in the name of Briton. Educated in the principles of the Protestant religion, he looked to their maintenance not only as his first duty, but as the only safeguard of his throne. Simple in his habits, moderate in his desires, unostentatious in his tastes, he preferred, amidst the

seductions of a palace, the purity and virtues of domestic life. His education had been neglected—his information was not extensive—his views on some subjects were limited; but he possessed in a very high degree that native sagacity and just discrimination, for the want of which no intellectual cultivation can afford any compensation, and which are so often found more than adequate to supply the place of the most brilliant and even solid acquisitions. His private correspondence, now published,* demonstrates that his mind was by nature uncommonly strong and powerful. He inherited from his father the hereditary courage and firmness of his race. On repeated occasions, when his life was attempted, he evinced a rare personal intrepidity; and when he proposed, during the dreadful riots of 1780, to ride at the head of his Guards into the midst of the fires of his capital, he did no more than what his simple heart told him was his duty, but what, nevertheless, bespoke the monarch fitted to quench the conflagration of the world. Though quick in conversation, as kings generally are, he could not be said to have an acute mind; and yet the native strength of his intellect enabled him to detect at once any sophistry which interfered with the just sense he always entertained of his public or religious duties. When Mr Dundas, in the course of conversation on the Catholic claims, previous to Mr Pitt's retirement on that ground in 1800, urged the often repeated argument, that the coronation oath was taken by him only in relation to his executive duties, he at once replied, "Come, come, Mr Dundas, let us have none of your Scotch metaphysics."

But his firmness and principle were of a more exalted cast than what arises from mere physical resolution. No man possessed moral determination in a higher degree, or

* Particularly in Mr Twiss's very interesting *Life of Lord Eldon*. It is not going too far to say that the letters of George III. are the ablest of the many able ones in that work. The same appears in many of the very important letters published in Lord Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors*.

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LXIV.

1810.

19.
His great
moral
courage.¹ *Ante*, ch.
9, § 24, note.

was more willing, when he felt he was right, to take his full share of the responsibility consequent upon either supporting or resisting any measure of importance. "Though none of my ministers stand by me, yet I will not succumb,"* said he in 1767, in the first serious conflict in which he was engaged after coming to the throne. His moral courage, when his ministers vacillated, singly subdued the fearful riots of 1780.¹ "Is it lawful," said he, "to fire on the people, if engaged in actual violence?" "It is," replied the attorney-general, "but there is a hesitation in the Ministers about signing the warrant." "Give it me, and I will sign it myself," replied the bold-hearted monarch; he did so, and the riots in twelve hours were at an end. The firmness which he exhibited on occasion of the run upon the Bank, and the mutiny at the Nore in 1797, brought the nation safely through the most dangerous crisis of recent times. His inflexible determination, in 1807, to admit no compromise with the Catholics regarding the coronation oath, averted for twenty years that loosening of the constitution in church and state, under which the nation has since so grievously laboured. When resisting, almost alone, Mr Fox's India bill in 1783, he expressed his determination rather to resign his crown, and retire to Hanover, than permit it to become law. And the result has proved, both that he had correctly scanned on that occasion the feelings of the English people, and rightly appreciated the probable effect of the proposed measure at once on our Eastern empire, and the balance of the constitution in this country.

20.
His failings,
and redeem-
ing points.

He was obstinate, and sometimes vindictive, in his temper, tenacious of power, and contrived, throughout his whole reign, to retain in his own hands a larger share of real authority than usually falls to the lot of sovereigns in constitutional monarchies. But he had nothing permanently cruel or oppressive in his disposition: he freely

* George III. to Lord Chatham, 30th May 1767.—*Chatham Correspondence*, iii. 261.

forgave those who had attempted his life; and stood forth, on every occasion, the warm supporter of all measures having a humane or beneficent tendency. This inflexible disposition, however, sometimes betrayed him into undue obstinacy; and his well-known determination to admit no accommodation with the American insurgents, prolonged that unhappy contest for years, after even his own ministers had become aware that it was hopeless. Yet even such a resolution had something magnanimous in its character. It is now well-known, that, but for the incapacity of the generals in command of the armies, this firmness would have been rewarded with success; and all must admit, that his first words to the American minister who came to his court after the peace,—“I was the last man in my dominions to acknowledge your independence; but I will be the first to support it, now that it has been granted,”—were worthy the sovereign of a great empire, whose moral resolution misfortune could not subdue, and whose sense of honour prosperity could not weaken.

Selecting, out of the innumerable arts which flourished in his dominions, that on which all others were dependent, he concentrated the rays of royal favour on the simple labours of the husbandman. Equalling Henry IV. in the benevolence of his wish,* and outstripping both him and his own age in the justice of his discrimination, he said that he hoped to live to see the day, not merely when all his subjects could read, but “when every man in his dominions should have *his Bible* in his pocket.” Like all men in high situations, during a period of popular excitement, of a really upright and conscientious character, he was for a considerable period of his reign the object of general obloquy; and to such a length was this carried, that open attempts to assassinate him were repeatedly made when he appeared in public; but he long survived, as real virtue generally does, this transient injustice.

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LXIV.1810.
20.His obsti-
nacy and
failings,
and redeem-
ing points
associated
with these.

21.

His encour-
agement of
agriculture,
and love of
the people.

* That he might live to see the day when all his subjects had their fowl in the pot.

CHAP.
LXIV.

1810.

When a jubilee was appointed in 1809, on occasion of the fiftieth year of his reign, the nation unanimously joined in it with thankfulness and devotion; and the more advanced of the present generation still look back to the manly and disinterested loyalty with which, in their youth, the 4th of June* was celebrated by all classes, with a feeling of interest, which is increased by the mournful reflection that, amidst the selfish ambition and democratic tendency of subsequent times, such feelings, in this country at least, must, at least with a large part of the people, be numbered among the things that have been.

22.
Mental
alienation
of the King
in the close
of 1810.
Nov. 2,
1810.

The reign of the venerable monarch, however, who had awakened these feelings of loyalty among his subjects, was now drawing to a close. The health of the Princess Amelia, his favourite daughter, had long been declining, and she breathed her last, after a protracted illness, which she bore with exemplary resignation, on the 2d November 1810. The anguish which the King underwent on this occasion was such, that it produced a return of the grievous mental malady which in 1788 had thrown the nation into such universal grief. Parliament met on the 1st November, in consequence of the monarch's inability to sign any farther prorogation; but, as the alarming indisposition of his majesty had for some time been a matter of notoriety, it was deemed advisable to adjourn from time to time, in the hope, which was for some time held out, of a speedy recovery. These hopes, however, having at length vanished, and the mental aberration of the monarch having assumed a fixed character, it became necessary to apply to parliament on the subject; and on the 20th December, Mr Perceval brought forward the subject in the House of Commons.¹

Dec. 20.
¹ Ann. Reg.
1811, p. 11.

The basis of his proposition was the resolutions which were the groundwork of Mr Pitt's regency bill, concerning which there was so vehement a debate in 1788; and they were as follows:—1. That the King being prevented

* The birthday of George III.

by indisposition from attending to the public business, the personal exercise of the royal authority has been suspended ; 2. That it is the right and duty of parliament, as representing all the estates of the people of the realm, to provide the means of supplying the defect in such a manner as the exigency of the case may seem to them to require ; 3. That for this purpose the Lords and Commons should determine in what manner the royal assent should be given to bills which had passed both houses of parliament, and how the exercise of the power and authority of the crown should be put in force during the continuance of the King's indisposition. The great feature of all these resolutions was, that they were a proceeding by *bill*, and not by *address* ; and although such a course involved the anomalous absurdity of the royal assent being held to be validly interposed by commission, under the authority of parliament, to a bill for regulating the royal functions, and settling the party by whom they should be exercised, at a time when the royal person was confessedly incapable of adhibiting such consent ; yet such an assumption of power by parliament was thought no unwarrantable stretch in such circumstances, when the legislature was *de facto* resolved into two of its elements, and yet the actual existence of the monarch precluded the heir-apparent from ascending the throne in virtue of the law of hereditary succession.¹

It was intimated, at the same time, that it was the intention of government to bring forward a bill, vesting all the powers of the crown in the Prince of Wales, to administer the affairs of the country in the name and on the behalf of his majesty, under no other restriction except such securities for the safety and comfort of the royal person, and the easy resumption of his authority in the event of recovery, as might appear necessary, and a certain restriction for a limited time of the prerogative of creating peers. These propositions were the subject of

CHAP.
LXIV.

1810.

23.

Proceedings
in parliament
on that event.

¹ Parl. Deb.
xviii. 242,
247. Ann.
Reg. 1811,
p. 1.

24.

Proposi-
tions
brought for-
ward by
ministers.

CHAP.
LXIV.

1810.

anxious debate in the two houses of parliament, and the arguments advanced on both sides are worthy of notice even in a European history, as involving the fundamental principles on which constitutional monarchies are rested. The first proposition passed unanimously; the second, declaring the right of parliament to supply the defect, did the like, with the single dissentient voice of Sir Francis Burdett; but upon the third, which declared that parliament should proceed *by bill* to fix the person who was to exercise the royal authority, the Opposition took their stand. An amendment, that *an address* should be presented to the Prince of Wales praying him to take upon himself the royal functions, was proposed by Mr Ponsonby, and on it the main debate took place.¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
xviii. 242,
247, 26.
Ann. Reg.
1811, p. 1.

25.
Argument
for proceeding
by address on the
part of the
Opposition.

On the part of the Opposition, it was argued by Mr Ponsonby, Sir Samuel Romilly, and Earl Grey:—"The case which at present calls for the interposition of parliament, is the absence of the kingly power; and that not owing to his abdication or to the failure of heirs, but to the incapacity of the existing monarch to execute the duties of the royal office. In dealing with so delicate a matter, one bordering so closely on the very foundations of government, it is of the last importance to adhere to the rules established by former precedent, and, in the absence of positive enactment, proceed in the paths of ancient usage. What, then, in similar circumstances, have our ancestors done? At the Restoration in 1661, the basis of the whole change was the declaration of Charles II. from Breda; and this declaration, with the letter from the King which accompanied it, was delivered on the 25th April; and between that and the 29th of May, when the Restoration took place, an application was made from the Commons to the Lords to put the Great Seal in activity, as without it the proceedings of the courts of law were stopped; but this the House of Peers declined, and the Commons, sensible that their application was absurd

and unconstitutional, gave up the proposition. Again at the Revolution, when James II. had left the country, and the throne was thereby vacant, what did parliament do? Did they proceed by bill to settle the person who was to succeed to the crown, and go through the farce of affixing the Great Seal to an act when there was no sovereign on the throne? No. Even in that extreme case, when the liberties and religion of the whole nation were at stake, and constitutional principles were so well understood from the recent discussion they had undergone during the great Rebellion and at the Restoration, they never dreamt of such an anomaly, but contented themselves with simply addressing the Prince of Orange to call a parliament; and, when it assembled, they read the great compact between king and people, the Bill of Rights, and immediately proclaimed William and Mary King and Queen of Great Britain. If proceeding by address was the proper course in the greater cause and on the greater emergency, it must be considered sufficient in the lesser.

“With regard to the proceeding by bill, its absurdity is so manifest, that the only surprising thing is, how it ever could have been thought of. It is matter of universal notoriety, that every bill must have the royal assent before it becomes law; and, if that is the case in ordinary instances, how much more must it hold in that most momentous of all legislative enactments, the succession of the crown? Now, by the 33d of Henry VIII., the royal assent must be given by the King personally in parliament, or by commissioners appointed by letters-patent under the royal sign-manual. Is his majesty at present capable of giving his consent in either of these ways? Confessedly not; and if so, then the proposed bill, though it may have passed both houses of parliament, must ever want the authority of law. On what pretence, then, can we assume to do by fiction, and by an artificial and operose proceeding, what, in

CHAP.
LXIV.
1811.

26.
Anomalous
nature of
the proceed-
ing by bill.

CHAP.
LXIV.

1811.

27.
That by
address
meets all
the circum-
stances of
the case.

point of fact, is universally known to be impossible? Other precedents in older times, still more precisely in point, might be quoted; but these considerations seem so decisive of the matter at issue, as to render their examination unnecessary.

“It may be conceded that the two houses of parliament, and they alone, have the right to supply a deficiency, whether temporary or permanent, in the executive; but the question is, what is the proper and constitutional form for them to proceed on upon the occasion? It is just as possible to tell the heir-apparent what restrictions are to be imposed on his authority, in the address which calls upon him to exercise the functions of royalty, as in the bill which confers its powers upon him. If it is deemed advisable to place the custody of the monarch in the hands of the Queen, and to give her majesty the appointment of the great officers of his household, as well as the power of taking the initiative in restoring him to the throne upon his convalescence, is it to be presumed that the Prince Regent, even when he had assumed the powers of royalty, in consequence of the address of the two houses, would refuse his concurrence to such an arrangement? It is true, in this way the limitations which parliament may deem necessary upon his power, may not form fundamental parts of the Regent's authority; but you have just the same security that he will assent to them as to any other bill which has passed both houses, as to which there is no instance of a rejection since the Revolution. It is no answer to these objections to say, the same thing was done in 1788, and that precedent should now be followed. The times, the circumstances of the empire, were essentially different in the two cases: then the chief danger apprehended was from the royal prerogative; now a crippled executive is the greatest calamity which the country, beset with dangers, could encounter.”¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
xviii. 267,
279.

On the other hand, it was contended by Mr Canning,

Mr Perceval, and Lord Castlereagh:—"Not the right and power of parliament to supply the present defect, but the mode of exercising it, is in question. That great and serious difficulties lie in the way of either of the two methods which might be followed, may at once be admitted: but the question is, not whether either mode of proceeding is unexceptionable, but to which the least important objections can be stated. It is no fault of ours that we are placed in a situation at once painful and perplexing: our duty is to deal with these difficulties in the most legal and constitutional manner which existing circumstances will admit. To object to either of the methods of proceeding (by bill or address) its own inherent difficulties and embarrassments, is only to say, in other words, that we are placed in a situation in the highest degree perplexing. That, however, is not our own act, but that of Providence, and we must deal with it as our ancestors have done. Every catastrophe which suspends or dissolves the hereditary succession to the throne, is necessarily involved in such difficulties: the only point for consideration is, what is the best mode of getting out of them?

"Now, what precedent does former usage afford to guide us in such perplexities? The example of the Restoration cannot with any propriety be referred to on this question; because then an exiled monarch was to be restored to a right of which he had been forcibly and unjustly deprived, and an acknowledged title to be simply proclaimed and re-established. Can this be affirmed to be the predicament in which we stand at this moment? Unquestionably not; for we have now no pre-existing right to declare, but a contingency unforeseen by the existing law to provide for. Then, as to the precedent of the Revolution, splendid and cheering as the recollection of that great event must always be to Englishmen, it will be wise in parliament, before they permit their feelings to be carried away by it, to consider well whether it

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28.Answer by
the minis-
ters.29.
Examina-
tion of for-
mer prece-
dents.

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1811.

has any application to the circumstances in which we are now placed. Was the object of parliament, at that period, to provide for the care and custody of the person of the monarch? Was it to provide for his return to the government of the country upon his restoration to health? Was it to erect a temporary sovereignty during the incapacity of the monarch who, it was hoped, would soon be restored to health? Was it not, on the contrary, to provide *against* the restoration of James—to erect a barrier against his return, and defend the crown, which they proposed to transfer, against the hostile approach of its ancient possessor?

30.
Defence of
the proce-
dure by bill.

“The argument, founded upon the incompetency of applying the Great Seal to an act of parliament during the incapacity of the sovereign, is founded on no logical principle. Admitting that a fiction of law is adopted—an irregular and absurd proceeding, if you will, carried on when two branches of the legislature authorise the symbol of the consent of the third to be affixed to their bill without the knowledge or consent of that other—does not this arise necessarily from the melancholy event which for a time has resolved government into two of its elements, and compelled them to provide themselves for the public service with only the presumed or feigned consent of the third? It is surely a singular remedy for the unfortunate incapacity of one branch of the constitution, to proceed necessarily to incapacitate the remaining branches. The proceedings at the time of the Revolution were wise, just, and necessary, because there was no other mode of proceeding practicable at that period, when government was dissolved, and no legislative measure, even in the most informal style, could be adopted; but, because such a proceeding was proper then, does it follow that the same precedent should be followed now, when no such necessity exists? And is not the proposal to do so, in the forcible language of Mr Burke, ‘to make the extreme medicine of the constitution its daily bread?’

“ We have now a parliament full, free, and so constituted as to be perfectly competent to provide for the exigency that exists. What analogy is there between such a situation, and that at the Revolution, when the very convocation of a parliament was the first step to be taken, and that could only be done by address to the Prince of Orange ? Admitting the absurdity of applying the Great Seal, in the King’s name, to a bill which has passed both Houses, when there is no sovereign on the throne, the same difficulty exists in as great a degree to the whole proceedings of the regency during the King’s life, which, contrary to the fact, speak in the King’s name, and profess to utter his will. The question of a regency, it is historically known, was discussed at the Revolution, and rejected as unsuitable to the circumstances which then existed ; and this renders that precedent directly hostile to the proceeding by address in the present instance. The older precedents so standing, and such being the equal balance of difficulties or incompetencies on either side, what remains for us but to act upon the latest and most important authority, that of parliament on the king’s illness in 1788, which was adopted after the fullest discussion, in circumstances precisely parallel to the present, and with the assistance of all the light to be derived from the greatest constitutional lawyers and statesmen who ever adorned the British senate ? ”¹

Upon this debate, parliament, by a large majority in both houses, supported the resolutions proposed by ministers, that is, the proceeding by bill ; the numbers being in the Commons 269 to 157 ; in the Lords 100 to 74.²

The details of the regency bill were afterwards brought forward, and discussed with great spirit and minuteness in committees of both houses of parliament. Most of the clauses were adopted with no other than verbal alterations ; but a protracted debate took place on the clause which proposed to lay the Regent for twelve months under

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31.

Inapplica-
bility of the
precedent of
the Revolution.¹ Parl. Deb.
xviii. 280,
291.² Parl. Deb.
xviii. 329,
460. Ann.
Reg. 1811,
p. i.

32.

Diminution
of the minis-
terial major-
ity, but
their ulti-
mate suc-
cess. Dec.
31, 1810.

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certain restrictions, especially in the royal prerogative of creating peers, or calling the eldest sons of peers to the upper house by writ. These restrictions, however, for that period, were inserted in the bill, by a majority in the lower house of twenty-four; the numbers being two hundred and twenty-four to two hundred—a majority which fell on the matter of the limitation as to creating peers, to sixteen in the Commons, and in the Lords to six. This rapid diminution of the ministerial majority clearly indicated what an insecure tenure ministers were conceived to have of their places, and how strongly the now confirmed malady of the sovereign, and the known partiality of the Prince of Wales for the Whig party, had come to influence that numerous party in parliament—the waverers—in the line of policy they thought it expedient to adopt. The Queen, by the bill, had the appointment of all the offices connected with the King's household, and certain forms were prescribed, according to which she was to take the initiative in paving the way for his restoration to power in the event of his convalescence. But in the all-important matter of the appointment of a ministry, the Regent was invested, without any restriction, with the whole royal prerogative; and it was universally thought that the first use he would make of his newly-acquired power would be to dismiss the present ministers, and call Lords Grey and Grenville to the head of his councils. Thus modified, the bill appointing the Regent passed the House of Lords on the 29th January, by a majority, however, only of eight; and on the 6th February the royal assent was given by commission, and the Great Seal, the object of so much contention, affixed to the bill; upon which the Prince of Wales immediately entered on the whole functions of royalty, by the title of the Prince Regent.¹

Jan. 29,
1811.
Feb. 6.

¹ Parl. Deb.
xviii. 1084,
1140.

On calmly considering the subject of this vehement contention and narrow division in both houses of parliament, it cannot but strike the most inconsiderate observer,

how remarkable it was that the two great parties who divided the state took, upon this constitutional question, sides diametrically opposite to what might have been expected from their previous principles—the Whigs supporting now, as in 1788, the doctrine of the hereditary inherent right of the heir-apparent to the regency, during a contingency not provided for by the Act of Settlement or the constitution, and the Tories exerting all their efforts, equally as in the days of Mr Pitt, to negative the heir-apparent's claim *de jure* to the regency, and to confer it on him by act of parliament only, and under such restrictions as to the two houses of the legislature might seem expedient. A memorable instance of how much, even in the brightest days of national history, the greatest men in public life are influenced by considerations of interest to themselves or their party, in preference to adherence to the political principles which they profess; and of the ease with which the most conscientious minds are unconsciously swayed by the persuasive voice of private advantage or public ambition.

But if the merits of the arguments adduced on both sides on this occasion are considered, without reference to the objects of present advantage which either party had at heart, no doubt can be entertained that the Whigs, both in reason and on precedent, had the best of the dispute. Admitting that the constitution, as it at present exists, was originally formed by an exertion of the national will, in opposition to, or in constraint of, the views of the reigning monarch, still no one can doubt that the occasions on which reference is to be made to parliament to appoint the supreme executive magistrate, are extreme ones, and that recourse is not to be had to that *ultimum remedium*, except in cases where no other mode of solving the difficulty and carrying on the government can be discovered. In Mr Burke's words, already quoted, to act otherwise would be to make the extreme medicine of the constitution its daily bread. An event so little con-

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33.

Remarkable
sides taken
on this oc-
casion by
the Whigs
and Tories.

34.

Reflections
on the
merits of
the question.

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trary to the ordinary course of events that it unhappily occurred twice during the life of the same monarch—viz., the insanity or utter incapacity of the reigning sovereign—can hardly be said to be an extreme case, unprovided for by the constitution, calling for a recurrence to first principles, and warranting two branches of the legislature in disposing of the third and the executive magistracy. The right of hereditary succession—the fundamental principle of the monarchy—interfered with to the smallest possible extent at the Revolution, and then fixed *de futuro* on the firmest basis, clearly indicates the mode of solving the difficulty. The heir-apparent, if of competent age to undertake the government—if not, the party entitled by law to the regency during his minority—is the person to whom the interim duty of conducting the executive devolves, leaving it to parliament to make what provision they please for the custody of the person of the fatuous monarch.

35.
The Prince
Regent con-
tinues the
ministers in
power.
Feb. 12.

The result which followed this interesting discussion in both houses of parliament was such as was little anticipated, and one which, had it been foreseen, might possibly have inverted the sides which the Ministerial party and Opposition respectively took upon its merits. From the connexion which, during his whole past life, had subsisted between the Prince of Wales and the Whig party, and the close personal intimacy in which he had long lived with its principal leaders, it was universally expected that his first act, upon being elevated to the office of Prince Regent, would have been to have sent for Lords Grey and Grenville, and intrusted them with the formation of a new administration. In fact, the anticipation of this had, towards the close of the year 1810, sensibly diminished the ministerial majority in both houses of parliament; and, by inspiring government with the belief that their tenure of office was drawing to a close, and that an opposite system would immediately be embraced by their successors, had

impaired in a most serious manner, and at the most important crisis, their efforts for the prosecution of the war. The despatches of Wellington, during the momentous campaign of 1810 and the commencement of 1811, are filled with observations which, however guarded, show that he felt he was not supported at home as he ought to have been; that government threw upon him the whole responsibility connected with the continuance of the Peninsular struggle, and were either desponding of success after the disastrous termination of the Austrian war, or deemed exertion and expenditure thrown away, from a secret impression that their ministerial career was nearly at an end, and that all continental resistance would be immediately abandoned by their successors. It was, therefore, matter of no small surprise to all parties, and perhaps to none more than to the minister to whom it was addressed, when the Prince Regent, immediately upon being invested with the powers of royalty, wrote a letter to Mr Perceval, announcing that he had no intentions of making any change in the administration; and the speech to parliament which he immediately afterwards delivered differed in no respect, either in regard to sentiments or expression, from what might have been anticipated had George the Third been still discharging the functions of royalty.¹

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¹ Ann. Reg.
xviii. 11, 8,
9.

Although this communication assigned as the reason, and the *sole* reason, for the Regent continuing the Tories in office, "the irresistible impulse of filial duty and affection to his beloved and afflicted father, which led him to dread that any act on his part might, in the smallest degree, have the effect of interfering with the progress of his sovereign's recovery;" yet the determination it contained to continue the present government in their places, even for a limited period, gave great umbrage to the leaders of the Whig party. They complained that, as he was unrestricted in the choice of his

36.
Discontent
which this
gives to the
Whig party.

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1812.

ministers, no sufficient reason existed for the continuance in office of those to whom he had always been politically opposed; and they entertained an apprehension, which the events proved to be not unfounded, that the habits of official communication with some of the administration, and the social talents of others, might go far to obliterate that repugnance to the Tory party which the Prince had hitherto evinced. It was generally expected, however, that he would still revert to his earlier friends when the year during which the restrictions were imposed by parliament came to an end; and the opinion was confidently promulgated by those supposed to be most in the Regent's confidence, that February 1812 would see the Whig party entirely and permanently in office.¹

¹ Ann. Reg.
1812.

37.
The negotiation with
Lords Grey and Gren-
ville in Jan-
uary 1812,
to form a
Whig min-
istry, proves
abortive.
Jan. 16,
1812.

The event, however, again disappointed the hopes entertained by the Opposition. Early in January 1812, the administration sustained a loss by the resignation of Marquis Wellesley, the foreign secretary; and the reasons assigned for this step were, that the ministry, of which Mr Perceval formed the head, could not be prevailed upon to carry on the war in the Peninsula on such a scale, as was either suited to the dignity of the kingdom, or calculated to bring the contest to a successful issue. The Prince Regent, however, earnestly pressed his lordship to retain the seals of office, which he consented to do in the mean time; but when the restrictions expired in February, and still no disposition to make a change of ministry was evinced, the resignation was again tendered, accompanied by a statement that the new administration should be formed on an intermediate principle between instant concession to, and perpetual exclusion of, the Catholics, and with the understanding that the war was to be carried on with adequate vigour. This second resignation was accepted, and Lord Castlereagh was appointed foreign secretary in room of the Marquis; and in the mean time the Prince Regent,

Feb. 19.

Feb. 28.

Feb. 13.

through the medium of the Duke of York, opened a communication with Lords Grey and Grenville, the object of which was to induce them, and some of their friends, to form part of the government on the principle of mutual concession and an extended basis. It was soon discovered, however, that the differences between the leaders of the Whigs and Tories were insurmountable, and the result was, that the negotiation came to nothing. Shortly after, a motion by Lord Boringdon in the House of Peers, for an address to the Prince Regent, praying for the formation of a ministry upon an extended basis, was negatived by a majority of seventy-two. From what transpired in this debate, it was evident that a more vital question than even that of the conduct of the foreign war was now the obstacle to the formation of a coalition ministry ; and that Catholic emancipation, to the ultimate concession of which it was known Lord Wellesley was favourable, was the real point upon which irreconcilable differences existed, both in the cabinet and between some of its ministers and the throne.¹

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1812.

March 19.

¹ Parl. Deb.
xxii. 38, 89.
Ann. Reg.
1812, 129,
131.

A dreadful and unexpected event, however, soon after gave rise to a renewal of the negotiation, and apparently opened the way for the restoration of the Whigs to office, by the destruction of their most formidable and uncompromising opponent. On the 11th May, as Mr Perceval was entering the lobby of the House of Commons, at a quarter past five o'clock, he was shot through the heart, and immediately afterwards expired. A cry arose, "Where is the villain who fired?" and immediately a man of the name of Bellingham stepped forward, and, making no attempt to escape, calmly said, "I am the unfortunate man ; my name is Bellingham : it is a private injury ; I know what I have done ; it was a denial of justice on the part of government." He was forthwith seized and carried to the bar of the House of Commons, in which assembly, as well as in the Lords, the greatest agitation prevailed when the calamitous

38.
Assassina-
tion of Mr
Perceval.
May 11.

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LXIV.1812.
May 13.

event became known. Both houses without delay adjourned. A message of condolence was shortly after voted to the Prince Regent; and on the 13th, Lord Castlereagh, on the part of the government, proposed, and Mr Ponsonby, on that of the Opposition, seconded, a vote of £50,000 to the family of the deceased minister, and £2000 a-year annuity to his widow. It appeared, to the honour of this disinterested statesman, who had for years directed the exchequer of the most opulent empire in the world, that not only had he taken advantage of none of the means of enriching himself which were in his power, but he had not even been enabled to make that moderate provision for his family of twelve children which ordinary men, who have been successful in the legal profession, generally do. These provisions, to the honour of the Opposition and of human nature be it said, passed the house without a single dissentient voice, though a debate took place upon the subsequent grant of £3000 a-year to the eldest son of Mr Perceval, after the demise of his mother, which was, however, carried by a large majority; and a monument in Westminster Abbey to his memory, at the public expense, was also decreed.¹

May 15.
¹ Ann. Reg.
1812, 75,
79. Parl.
Deb. xxiii.
186, 199.39.
Trial and
execution of
the assassin.

The trial of the assassin, as the courts were sitting, and as no lengthened citation of the prisoner is required by the English law except in cases of high treason, took place on the 15th, four days after the murder. He was found guilty, and executed on the 18th in front of Newgate. His demeanour, both on the scaffold and in prison before his death, was firm, calm, and self-possessed; he engaged in his religious exercises with fervour, but uniformly persisted in denying his guilt, alleging that the death of Mr Perceval, which he always admitted, was a proper retribution for the minister's neglect of his application for redress of private injuries. An attempt to prove him insane at the trial failed;² and a motion to have the trial postponed, to obtain evidence from a dis-

² State
Trials, xvi.
341, 347.
Ann. Reg.
1812.
Chron. 73,
75.

tance of his mental aberration, was refused by the court. Indeed his whole demeanour, though it indicated a degree of excitement on the subject of his real or supposed wrongs which amounted to monomania, was by no means such as to indicate that amount of mental derangement which renders an insane person irresponsible for his actions.

It afterwards appeared, by the production of a letter on the subject from Lord Leveson Gower, the British ambassador at St Petersburg at the time, in the House of Commons, that, though he had sustained great patrimonial losses in England and Russia, yet they had arisen chiefly from his own intemperate conduct and language, and that his supposed claims for indemnification against the British government, and their alleged injustice in disregarding them, were entirely visionary. It is quite clear that he was the fit object of punishment, even though he had a sort of monomania on his real or supposed wrongs; for his aberration consisted in the exaggeration of these wrongs only, not in any insensibility to the guilt of murder, supposing them true. But though, in all probability, the result to the unhappy man would have been the same, and public justice in the end would have required his execution, it must always be regarded with regret, as a stain upon British justice, that the motion made, and earnestly insisted on by his counsel, to have the trial postponed for some days, to obtain evidence from a distance to establish his insanity, was not acceded to;* that a judicial proceeding, requiring beyond all others the most calm and deliberate consideration, should have been hurried over with a precipitance which, if not illegal, was at least unusual;¹ and that so glorious an opportunity of exhibiting the triumph of

40.
Reflections
on this proceeding.

¹ State
Trials, 1812,
xvi. 341-7.
Ann. Reg.
1812.
Chron. 73,
75, 304, 307.

* It is a striking proof of the progress which just principles have since made in our jurisprudence, that the course here recommended was precisely what Lord Denman and the Court of King's Bench adopted on the arraignment of M'Naughton for the murder of Mr Drummond, whom he had mistaken for Sir Robert Peel, in January 1843, under circumstances precisely similar.

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41.
Renewal of
the negotia-
tion with
the Whigs.

May 20.

June 1.

— 5.

— 8.

— 11.

justice over the strongest and most general feelings of resentment should have been lost from a desire to accelerate, by a few days only, the execution of the criminal.

This tragic event reopened to the Whigs the path to power ; for not only was the most determined opponent of them, and of the Catholic claims, now removed, but a general wish was felt and openly expressed in the nation for the formation of an administration on an extended basis ; which, sinking all minor points of dispute, and embracing the leading men of both parties, should combine the whole talent of the nation in one phalanx, for the prosecution of the great contest in which it was engaged. This idea, so natural and apparently feasible to men inexperienced in public affairs—so impracticable to all acquainted with their real character, and the vital questions on which irreconcilable differences exist between equally able and conscientious statesmen—had got at this period such hold of the minds of the people, that repeated motions were made in parliament, after Mr Perceval's death, for the formation of a cabinet embracing the leading men of ability in all parties. On the 20th May a motion for an address to the Prince Regent, praying him to construct a cabinet on this principle, brought forward by Mr Stuart Wortley, (now Lord Wharncliffe,) and supported by the whole strength of the Whigs, was carried against ministers by a majority of *four*—the numbers being one hundred and seventy-four to one hundred and seventy. The subject was afterwards resumed with extraordinary anxiety, on more than one occasion, in both houses of parliament ; and in the course of these discussions it transpired, both that the Prince Regent had taken the most decisive steps to carry into effect the wishes of the nation, and that the grand difficulty which obstructed the formation of a united administration was the question of Catholic emancipation. Lord Wellesley first received a commis-

sion to form a government; and, when he failed, that arduous duty was intrusted to Lord Moira. Lord Wellesley professed his willingness to take office on the principle of concession to the Irish Romanists, of adequate vigour in the Peninsular war, and of a union of parties in the cabinet; but the first principle the Prince Regent was not inclined to admit, and it was firmly rejected by Lord Liverpool and the Tories in office. After some discussion his royal highness, through Earl Moira, conveyed a wish to Lords Grey and Grenville, that they and their friends should form a leading part of the administration. Conferences took place accordingly: the differences about the Catholics of Ireland and the Spanish war were got over; everything appeared on the eve of a satisfactory adjustment, and no obstacles remained to prevent the return of the Whigs to power, on all the principles for which they had so long contended, when the negotiation was suddenly broken off, and the Tories were once more firmly seated in office, by one of those unforeseen and trivial obstacles which so often, in the affairs of state, derange the calculations of the wisest statesmen, and yet decide the fate of nations.¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
xxiii. 250,
381.

In the course of Earl Moira's discussions with Earl Grey and Lord Grenville, which from the first were conducted with the most perfect candour and good faith on both sides, a difficulty occurred as to the appointment of the great officers of the royal household, which had not previously been anticipated, but which proved fatal to the whole negotiation, and to which events in subsequent times have given an unlooked-for degree of interest. It had generally, though not always, been the practice for the chief officers of the household to be changed with an alteration of ministry, upon the principle that a government could not be supposed to possess the royal confidence, and must necessarily be hampered and restricted in its measures, when persons belonging to an opposite

42.
Difficulty
respecting
the officers
of the
household.

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June 6.

and hostile party were in daily, almost hourly, communication, on the most intimate terms, with the sovereign. The Whig peers, in order to prevent such a difficulty arising in a more advanced stage of the administration, stated it as an indispensable condition of their accession to office, that they should enjoy the same privileges in this respect as had been exercised by their predecessors on similar occasions, and this preliminary led to secret conferences, more curious even than what passed at the public negotiations. "Are you prepared," said Lord Moira to the Prince Regent, "to concede the appointment of the household to the leaders of the new administration?" "I am," answered the Prince. "Then," replied the chivalrous nobleman, "not one of your present servants shall be displaced: it is enough for the crown to yield the principle, without submitting also to the indignity of the removal." To complete the extraordinary chances which traversed this momentous negotiation, Mr Sheridan, to whom Lord Yarmouth, on the part of the lords of the household, intrusted a message stating their readiness to solve the difficulty by resigning, delayed to deliver this message till it was too late, in the hope of securing for his party a triumph over the throne; and Lord Moira, upon the part of the Prince Regent, declined to make any such concession a fundamental condition of the administration; and thus the negotiation was broken off.¹

¹ Personal information, and Lord Yarmouth's speech. Parl. Deb. xxiii. 423.

43.
Which excludes the Whigs from office.

The Prince, irritated at what he deemed an unwarrantable interference with the freedom of choice and personal comfort of the sovereign, and acting under the direction of Lord Moira, who thought he had yielded all that could be required of the crown, immediately appointed Lord Liverpool first lord of the treasury. All the existing ministers were continued in their places, including Lord Castlereagh in the important one of minister of foreign affairs; and the Tories, lately so near shipwreck, found themselves, from the strong intermixture of personal

feeling in the failure of the negotiations which had excluded their rivals, more firmly seated in power than ever. Lord Yarmouth, the highest officer in the household, whose exclusion from office was probably the principal object which the Whig leaders had in view in insisting so much on this condition, afterwards stated in the House of Lords, that both he himself, and also the other officers in the palace, were prepared to have resigned their offices the moment the arrangements for the formation of a new ministry were completed; and that all they wished for was, that they themselves, and their sovereign, should be saved the pain of a dismissal.¹

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June 11.
¹ Lord Yarmouth's speech. Parl. Deb. xxiii. 423; and Papers Ibid. App. i. 43; and Ann. Reg. 1812, 84, 90.

In reflecting, with all the lights of subsequent experience, on the singular failure of this important negotiation, it is impossible to doubt that Lords Grey and Grenville were right in the conditions which they so firmly insisted on as a condition of their taking office. It is no doubt easy for the satirist to inveigh against the eagerness for patronage which induces public men, after all questions of policy and principles of government have been adjusted, to break off negotiations, merely because they cannot agree upon who is to have the disposal of domestic appointments; and Mr Sheridan had a fair subject for his ridicule when he said that his friends the Whigs had fairly outdone James II., for he had lost three crowns for a mass, whereas they had lost the government of three kingdoms for three white sticks. But all this notwithstanding, it is sufficiently clear that the Whigs, who could not have foreseen the intended resignation of the Tory officers of the household, were right in stipulating for a power, if necessary, to remove them. Household appointments, of no small moment even to private individuals, are of vital consequence to kings, and still more to queens. The strongest intellect is seldom able to withstand the incessant influence of adverse opinions, delicately and skilfully applied by persons in intimate confidence, and possessing numerous opportunities for

44.
Reflections on this subject.

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1812.

successfully impressing them. If no man is a hero, still less is he a sage, to his *valet-de-chambre*. It is in vain to say that the private inclinations of the sovereign are to be consulted in preference to the wishes of his responsible ministers. Household appointments in a palace are, in truth, political situations, and must be in harmony with the principles of government which public opinion or external circumstances have rendered necessary for the country. To decide otherwise is to impose upon ministers the responsibility of office without its power ; and hold up one government to the country as regulating its public concerns, while another is in secret directing all its movements.

45.
Vital inter-
ests at stake
to Europe
in this nego-
tiation.

But the failure of this momentous negotiation suggests another and a still more serious subject of consideration. All the great questions of policy, both in external and internal concerns, had been arranged between the sovereign and the new ministry. The difficulties of Catholic emancipation, the Peninsular contest, and American concession, had been satisfactorily adjusted, and a vital change in the government and policy of the country was on the point of taking place, when it was prevented, and Mr Pitt's system continued as the ruling principle, by a mere contest about the appointment of three household officers ! Yet what mighty interests, not only to Great Britain but to the human race, were then at stake ; and what wondrous changes in the course of events must have ensued, if this seemingly providential difference about the household officers had not arisen ! The contest with France, after a duration of nearly twenty years, had at length reached its crisis. The rock of Sisyphus, rolled with such difficulty to the summit of the steep, was about to recoil. The negotiation with the Whigs was broken off on the 6th June. On the 13th of the same month Wellington crossed the Portuguese frontier, and commenced the campaign of Salamanca ;¹ while on the 23d Napoleon passed the Niemen, and perilled his crown and

¹ Gurw. ix.
238.

his life on the precarious issue of a Russian invasion.¹ The expulsion of the French from the Peninsula, the catastrophe of Moscow, the resurrection of Europe, were on the eve of commencing, when the continued fidelity of England to the cause of freedom hung on the doubtful balance of household appointments !

If a change of ministry had taken place at that time, the destinies of the world would probably have been changed. The Whigs, fettered by their continued protestations against the war, could not, with any regard to consistency, have prosecuted it with vigour. Their unvarying prophecies of disaster from the Peninsular contest would have paralysed all the national efforts in support of Wellington ; their continued declamations on the necessity of peace would have led them to embrace the first opportunity of coming to an accommodation with Napoleon. Alexander, mindful of their refusal of succour after the battle of Eylau, would have been shaken in his resolution after the battle of Borodino. Sweden, unsupported by English subsidies, would not have ventured to swerve from the French alliance. The occupation of Moscow would have led to a submission destructive of the liberties of Europe ; or the retreat, unthreatened, from the north, would have been spared half its horrors ; at latest, peace would have been concluded with the French Emperor at Prague. Wellington would have been withdrawn with barren laurels from the Peninsula ; Europe had been yet groaning under the yoke of military power, and the dynasty of Napoleon still upon the throne. In contemplating the intimate connexion of such marvellous results with the apparently trivial question of household appointments in the royal palace of Great Britain, the reflecting observer, according to the temper of his mind, will indulge in the vein of pleasantry or the sentiment of thankfulness. The disciples of Voltaire, recollecting how a similar court intrigue arrested the course of Marlborough's victories in one age, and prolonged the popular

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¹ Fain, 163.

46.
Results
which
would have
followed if
the Whigs
had then
obtained
office.

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rule in Great Britain in another, will inveigh against the subjection of human affairs to the direction of chance, the caprice of sovereigns, or the arts of courtiers ; while the Christian philosopher, impressed with the direction of all earthly things by an Almighty hand, will discern in these apparently trivial events the unobserved springs of Supreme Intelligence ; and conclude, that as much as royal partialities may be the unconscious instruments of reward to an upright and strenuous, they may be the ministers of retribution to a selfish and corrupted age.

47.
Character of
George the
Fourth.

George IV., who, probably from personal rather than public considerations, was led to take this important step in the outset of his government, had the good fortune to wield the sceptre of Great Britain during the most glorious era in its long and memorable annals ; and yet no sovereign ever owed so little to his own individual wisdom or exertions. The triumphs which have rendered his age immortal were prepared by other hands, and matured in a severer discipline. It was his good fortune to succeed to the throne at a time when the seeds sown by the wisdom of preceding statesmen, the valour of former warriors, and the steadiness of the last monarch, were beginning to come to maturity ; and thus he reaped the harvest prepared, in great part, by the labours of others. Yet justice must assign him a considerable place in the august temple of glory completed during his reign. If the foundation had been laid, and the structure was far advanced, when he was called to its direction, he had the merit of putting the last hand to the immortal fabric. To the vast and unprecedented exertions made by Great Britain towards the close of the contest, he gave his cordial concurrence ; he resisted the seducing offers of peace when they could have led only to an armed neutrality ; and, by his steady adherence to the principles of the Grand Alliance, he contributed in no slight degree to keep together its discordant elements, when they were

ready to fall to pieces amidst the occasional disasters and frequent jealousies of the last years of the war. The unprecedented triumphs with which it concluded, and the profound peace which has since followed, left little room for external exploits during the remainder of his reign ; and the monarch was of too indolent a disposition, though not of too limited a range of intellectual vision, to influence those momentous internal changes which ensued, or take any part either in advancing or retarding the vast revolution of general thought which succeeded to the excitement and animation of the war. Yet history must at least award to him the negative merit of having done nothing to accelerate the changes which grew up with such extraordinary rapidity during that period, so fertile in intellectual innovation ; of having been the last man in his dominions who yielded to that momentous alteration in their religious institutions which first loosened the solid fabric of the British empire ; and of having left to his successors the constitution, at a period when it was seriously menaced by domestic distress and general excitement, unimpaired either by tyrannic encroachment or democratic innovation.

If, from the comparatively blameless and glorious picture of George IV.'s public administration, we turn to the details of his private life, and the features of his individual character, we shall find less to approve and more to condemn. Yet even there some alleviating circumstances may be found ; and the British nation, in the calamities which hereafter may ensue from a failure of the direct line of succession, can discern only the natural result of the restrictions, equally impolitic and unjust, which it has imposed, in their dearest concerns, on the feelings of its sovereigns. His talents were of no ordinary kind, and superior to those of any of the family. It is impossible to see the busts of the sons of George III. in Chantrey's gallery, without being at once convinced that the Prince of Wales had the most intellectual head

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48.
His private
disposition
and charac-
ter.

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of the group.* None could excel, few equal, his talents in conversation, or the ability with which he sustained it with the ablest and most intellectual men of the day. His tastes were cultivated; he had a high admiration for the great works of painting; his ear in music was exquisite; and although his passion in architecture was rather for the splendour of internal decoration than the majesty of external effect, yet the stately halls of Windsor will long remain an enduring monument of his patronage of art in its highest branches. The jealousy which generally exists between the ruling sovereign and the heir-apparent early brought him into close connexion with the leaders of the Whig party; and for nearly fifteen years Carlton House was the grand rendezvous of all the statesmen, wits, and beauties, whom jealousy of the reigning power had thrown into the arms of the Opposition.

49.
His great
elegance of
manners,
and felicity
of expres-
sion.

This circumstance had a material influence on his future character. Accustomed from his earliest youth to the society, not merely of the most elegant but the most intellectual men of his age; the companion, not less than the friend, of Burke and Fox, of Grey and Sheridan, he soon acquired that skill and delicacy in conversation which such intercourse alone can communicate, and shone with the reflected light which so often, when presented by those habituated to such society, dazzles the inexperienced beholder, and supplies, at least during the hours of social intercourse, the want of original thought or solid acquirements. Yet his talents were not entirely acquired from the brilliant circle by which he was surrounded. His perceptions were quick; his abilities, when fairly

* This is decisively established by the testimony of no ordinary observer, and certainly no partial judge. "It may give you pleasure," said Lord Byron to Sir Walter Scott, "to hear that the Prince Regent's eulogium on you to me was conveyed in language which would only suffer by my attempting to transcribe it; and with a tone and taste which gave me a very high idea of his abilities and accomplishments, which I had hitherto considered as confined to *manners*, certainly superior to those of any living gentleman."—LORD BYRON TO SIR WALTER SCOTT, *July 6, 1812*; LOCKHART'S *Life of Scott*, ii. 402.

roused either by the animation of conversation or the lustre of external events, of a very high order ; and many of his holograph letters are a model of occasional felicity both in thought and expression.* His features were handsome ; his figure, in youth, graceful and commanding ; and both then, and when it was injured in maturer years by the hereditary corpulence of his family, his manners were so perfectly finished, that he was universally admitted to deserve the title which he acquired—that of the first gentleman in Europe.

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But with these—no inconsiderable qualities, it is true, in a sovereign—the meed of praise due to his memory is exhausted, and there remains nothing but to do justice to the faults, and draw no screen over the many frailties, of his character. Thrown from the outset of life into the vortex of dissipation, without the necessity for exertion, which, in an humbler rank, or on a despotic throne, so often counteracts its pernicious effects, he soon became an ardent votary of pleasure ; and without descending to the degrading habits to which that propensity often leads, he only rendered its sway on this account the more tyrannical and destructive to his character. Profuse, extravagant, and unreflecting, he not only was throughout his whole life, before he mounted the throne, drowned in debt, but the systematic pursuit of refined enjoyment involved him in many discreditable and unfeeling, and some dishonourable acts. Dissipation and profligacy in youth, indeed, are so usual in princes, and arise so readily from the society with which they are surrounded, that

50.
His frailties
and faults.

* The following holograph note, from the Prince Regent to the Duke of Wellington, accompanied the appointment of the latter as Field-Marshal after the battle of Vitoria:—"Your glorious conduct is above all human praise, and far above any reward. I know no language the world affords worthy to express it. I feel I have nothing left to say, but devoutly to offer up my prayer of gratitude to Providence that it has, in its omnipotent bounty, blessed my country and myself with such a general. You have sent me, among the trophies of your unrivalled fame, the staff of a French marshal, and I send you in return that of England."—*The PRINCE REGENT to WELLINGTON, 3d July 1813.*—GURWOOD, x. 532.

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they are to such persons peculiarly difficult of resistance ; but the passions of George IV., fretting against the unjust restrictions of the Marriage Act, led him into delinquencies of a more serious kind. His conduct towards Queen Caroline, whatever the demerits of that princess may have been, was unpardonable ; for it began to be unjust before those demerits could have been known, and continued to be unfeeling after misfortune had expiated them by suffering. And if it be true, as is generally believed, that he gained possession of the person of a beautiful and superior woman, Mrs Fitzherbert, by a fictitious or elusory marriage ceremony, and subsequently, after having made his friends in parliament deny its existence, deserted her, he was guilty of an action which passion cannot extenuate, and royalty should not excuse. He had more information and brighter abilities than his father, but not his sturdy honesty ; his dissimulation was profound, and his friends were often the victims of his deceit. The last days of this fortunate monarch and systematic voluptuary were chiefly spent at Windsor, in the seclusion of elegant society, intermingled with the brilliancy of conversational talent. And if its noble halls were the scene of meretricious ascendancy, at least they were not disgraced by open profligacy ; decency and seclusion threw a veil over irregular connexions ; and justice must admit that subjection to female charms was in his case more than usually pardonable, from the unjust laws which had deprived him of a free choice in virtuous attachments, and the calamitous union which had denied him the blessings of domestic and filial love.

51.
Character of
Lord Liver-
pool.

It is a singular circumstance, that the statesman who, with his sovereign, was thus elevated to the helm at a crisis of unexampled difficulty, and when the national prospects were to all appearance gloomy in the extreme, was, almost from the moment of his elevation, borne forward on an uninterrupted flood of success ; and that, though inferior in capacity to many of the great charac-

ters who had preceded him in the struggle, he exceeded them all in the felicity of his career, and the glorious events which, under his administration, were so deeply engraven on the monuments of history. Much of this extraordinary prosperity is doubtless to be ascribed to his singular good fortune. He had the almost unprecedented felicity of being called to the highest place in government at the very time when the tide, which ever exists in the affairs of men, was beginning to turn ; when the stream-flow of Napoleon's triumphs was changing to ebb ; and when the constancy of Britain, long conspicuous in adverse, was to be rewarded by a bright train of prosperous fortune. Like his royal master George IV., he thus reaped, with little exertion of his own, the fruits of the seed sown by the efforts of others ; and was called, during his lengthened ministry, rather to moderate the vices consequent on excessive prosperity, than to sustain the national spirit under the trials of protracted and searching adversity.

Justice, however, must assign to Lord Liverpool, if not the highest, at least a considerable place, among the great men who threw such imperishable glory over the annals of Britain during the latter period of the war. His capacity could not have been the least who stood foremost in rank through those memorable years. Granting to Alexander, Wellington, and Castlereagh, the merit of having been the main instruments in the deliverance of Europe, the British premier may at least justly lay claim to the subordinate but important merit of having strenuously supported their efforts, and furnished them with the means of achieving such important triumphs. His judgment in council, temper in debate, and conciliation in diplomacy, admirably seconded their heroic efforts. The resources brought by England to bear upon the fortunes of Europe, at the close of the struggle, were unexampled since the beginning of the world ; and if the spirit of the nation put them at his disposal, no small

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52.
His merits
and public
services.

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wisdom and skill were displayed in the use which he made of them. Notwithstanding all their successes, the Allied sovereigns were sometimes, from the jealousies and separate interests inherent in so vast a coalition, exposed to serious divisions; and on these occasions the judgment and prudence of Lord Liverpool were of the highest service to the common cause. He could not be called a powerful debater, and his speeches made little impression at the time on either house of parliament; but they abounded in valuable matter and sound argument, and few afford, on a retrospect, a more luminous view of the principles which swayed the government at many of the most important periods of the war. His private life was irreproachable, his domestic habits pure and amiable; and, like all the great statesmen of that heroic period, he long held the highest offices, and disposed of uncounted wealth, without a spot upon his integrity, or having conferred a more than moderate share of patronage on his connexions.

53.
His weak-
nesses and
errors.

He held a respectable place, however, in the second class of statesmen only, and did not belong to that of the master-spirits of mankind. He had not sufficient vigour of character, or reliance on his own judgment, to take a decided line in any arduous crisis. His maxim always was to temporise and avoid difficulties, rather than brave the danger in the outset. Under a calm and dignified deportment, and the most unruffled suavity in debate, he concealed an anxiety of temper and dread of responsibility, which often appeared painfully conspicuous at the council board, and rendered him unfit to hold the helm in any period of real danger. He had neither the ardour of genius, nor the strength of intellect, nor the heroism of valour in his character. Clear-sighted as to immediate, his vision was defective as to remoter dangers. Judicious and prudent in counsel in ordinary times, he was a dangerous adviser in cases of difficulty, and exercised a ruinous influence on the ultimate fortunes of his country. He was

mainly instrumental in introducing, after the close of the war, that seductive policy which purchases present favour by sacrificing future resources, and wins the applause of the existing multitude by risking the censure of the thinking in every future age. The popularity, accordingly, of his government, during the fifteen years that he remained prime-minister, was unprecedented ; opposition seemed to have disappeared in parliament, as it was thought to have expired in the country. But amidst all these seductive appearances, the elements of future discord were preparing. The sinking-fund was fatally encroached upon, with the general concurrence of the unthinking multitude ; indirect taxes, the pillar of public credit, were repealed to an unnecessary and ruinous extent ; a vast and uncalled-for monetary change spread unprecedented discontent through the industrious classes ; the people were habituated to the pernicious flattery that their voice is wisdom, and must be obeyed ; and out of the calm which was thought to be perpetual arose the tornado which revolutionised the constitution.

The year 1811 beheld the extinction of the absurd and exaggerated discontent against the Duke of York, which, for factious purposes, had been raised two years before. Colonel Wardle, the principal agent in producing the clamour, had long since returned to obscurity ; the want of the Duke's intimate acquaintance with the business of the Horse-Guards, and active zeal for the interests of the army, had long been severely felt ; and on the 25th May 1811, after somewhat more than two years spent in a private station, he was again, with the general concurrence of the nation and the universal approbation of the army, reinstated in his office of commander-in-chief, which he held during the whole remainder of the war. The subject was brought forward by Lord Milton in parliament shortly after it occurred ; but the result only tended to demonstrate, in the most decisive manner, the total revolution which public opinion had undergone

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54.
 Restoration
 of the Duke
 of York to
 the com-
 mand of
 the army.
 May 25,
 1811.

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LXIV.

1811.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1811, 72,
74. Par.
Deb. ix.
470, 510.

² Wellington
to Torrens,
June 29,
1811.
Gurw. viii.
61.

55.
Character of
Sir Francis
Burdett.

regarding it. The debate was feebly conducted on the part of the Opposition; when Lord Milton put the case hypothetically, that "the Duke might have been the victim of a foul conspiracy," a universal cheer burst from all parts of the house, and the motion to have the appointment censured was negatived by a majority of two hundred and forty-nine—the numbers being two hundred and ninety-six to forty-seven.¹ If any doubt could still exist on the justice as well as expedience of this step, it would be removed by the contemporary testimony of Wellington. "I rejoice most sincerely," said he, "at the reappointment of the Duke of York as commander-in-chief. The arrangement is not less a matter of justice to him than of benefit to the public interests; and it has been so admirably timed that the motion of Lord Milton is likely to be advantageous to the Duke's character."²

Two circumstances, during the years 1810 and 1811, convulsed the internal frame of society to an extraordinary degree, and are deserving of notice even in a general history. These were the parliamentary proceedings against Sir Francis Burdett for contempt of the House of Commons, and the general distress which led to the Luddite disturbances. SIR FRANCIS BURDETT is a statesman who, for nearly half a century, took so prominent a part in English parliamentary history, that he deserves a place in the portrait-gallery of the age. Endowed by nature with no ordinary talents, an accomplished scholar, an eloquent speaker, an indefatigable senator, the master of a splendid fortune, and connected both by position in society and family alliances with the higher branches of the nobility, he was yet for the greater part of his political career the ardent friend of the people; the adored, often rash and dangerous, champion of popular rights; a zealous advocate of parliamentary reform in its widest sense, an extended suffrage, Catholic emancipation, and all the objects which the extreme

section of the Whig party had at heart. But he was at the same time at bottom a sincere friend to the monarchy, and pursued these objects from a belief, sincere and honest, though now proved to be mistaken, that such changes, even if pushed to their utmost limits, were not inconsistent with the security of property, the stability of the altar, and the existence of the throne. A sense of this error caused him in the close of life, after the effect of the Reform Bill had become apparent, to join the conservative ranks ; but at the period with which we are now engaged he was the most furious opponent of the oligarchy who, he conceived, directed the national councils ; and “England’s pride and Westminster’s glory,” as he was termed by his potwalloping constituents in that borough, was ever in the foremost ranks of those who declaimed with most asperity against ministerial influence and parliamentary corruption.

He had long inveighed in no measured strains against the Tory majority by which the proceedings of the House of Commons were controlled ; but as most of these declamations were pronounced within the walls of parliament, they were beyond the reach of animadversion. At length, however, he laid himself open to attack in a more vulnerable quarter. A violent democrat, named John Gale Jones, had published a resolution of a debating club of which he was president, which the House of Commons deemed a libel on their proceedings, and that assembly had in consequence sent him to Newgate for breach of privilege. Sir Francis more than once brought this matter under the consideration of the House, and strongly contended, though in vain, that parliament had no legal power of their own authority to punish a person for an offence cognisable in the ordinary courts of justice, even though it did contain a libel on their proceedings, and that the warrant of commitment was illegal and a breach of the liberties of the subject. The House overruled these arguments by a majority of 153 to 14. Upon this

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56.
His libel on
the House of
Commons.

Feb. 21.

March 12.

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LXIV.1811.
March 24.¹ Ann. Reg.
1810, 92,
99.57.
His com-
mittal to the
Tower, and
consequent
riots.
March 26.

April 9.

Sir Francis published a letter to his constituents in Cobbett's *Weekly Register*, which, among other passages of strong invective, declared that the real question was, "Whether our liberty be still to be secured to us by the laws of our forefathers, or to lie at the absolute mercy of a part of our fellow-subjects, collected together by means which it is not necessary for me to describe. They have become, by burgage tenure, the proprietors of the whole legislature; and in that capacity, inflated with their high-flown and fanciful ideas of majesty, they assume the sword of prerogative, and lord it equally over the king and people!"¹

The House of Commons, upon this letter being brought before them, passed a resolution, by a majority of 190 to 152, that Sir Francis be committed to the Tower. Great doubts were entertained in the first instance by the Speaker, whether his warrant, which was immediately issued, would authorise the breaking open of Sir Francis's house, which was barricaded, and where he remained without moving out. The Attorney-general, (Sir V. Gibbs,) however, gave it as his opinion that entry might be made good by force, if it could not otherwise be obtained; and the sergeant-at-arms accordingly, on the day following, forced his way in by the aid of a police force, supported on the outside by the military. Sir Francis was found in his library, surrounded by his family, and employed, with a somewhat strained effort for theatrical effect, in making his son translate *Magna Charta*. Having made such a show of resistance as to demonstrate that he yielded to compulsion, he was conveyed under a military escort to the Tower, where he remained a prisoner till the close of the session of parliament. Serious riots occurred, and some lives were lost, on the evening of the day on which the imprisonment took place, chiefly in consequence of an erroneous report which was spread that the Tower guns had fired upon the people. Sir Francis afterwards wrote an intemperate

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letter to the Speaker on the alleged illegality of the proceeding, which, however, the House had the good sense, having exhausted their powers of chastisement, to pass over without farther notice. Meanwhile, the imprisoned baronet received a great variety of addresses from various popular assemblies in the kingdom, and the House of Commons was deluged with petitions for his liberation. But they continued firm; and Sir Francis remained in confinement till the prorogation of parliament, when the power of the assembly which committed him having ceased, he was of course liberated. Great preparations for his triumphal procession through the city to his residence in Piccadilly, were made by the populace, and serious apprehensions of disturbances were entertained; but he had the good sense or humanity not to bring his partisans into the risk which such a demonstration would have occasioned, by returning privately to his house by water. He afterwards brought actions at law against the Speaker of the House of Commons, for damages on account of illegal seizure, housebreaking, and imprisonment; and against Lord Moira, the Governor of the Tower, for unwarrantable detention; and the case was argued with the greatest ability by the Attorney-general* on the one side, and Sergeant (afterwards Mr Justice) Holroyd on the other. The Court of King's Bench, however, sustained the defence for both, that they acted under the orders of a competent authority, and that the privileges of parliament had not been exceeded, and could not be questioned in a court of law.¹

¹ Parl. Deb. xvi. 454, 630. Ann. Reg. 1810, 106, 110; and App. to Chron. 265, 267.

Upon this case it has been observed by Mr Coleridge:—"The House of Commons must of course have the power of taking cognisance of offences against its own rights. Sir Francis Burdett might have been properly sent to the Tower for the speech which he made to the House; but when afterwards he published them in Cobbett, and they

58.
Reflections
on this
subject.

* Mr Sergeant Shepherd, afterwards Lord Chief Baron of Scotland.

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1811.

¹ Table-
Talk, i. 8, 9.

took cognisance of it as a breach of privilege, they violated the plain distinction between privilege and law. As a speech in the House, the House could alone amadvert upon it, consistently with the effective preservation of its most necessary prerogative of freedom of debate ; but when that speech became a book, then the law was to look upon it ; and there being a law of libel commensurate with every possible object of attack in the state, privilege, which acts or ought to act only as a substitute for other laws, could have nothing to do with it.”¹

In these observations of the philosophic sage, there is much subject for anxious reflection in the breast of every friend to real freedom. It is the essential characteristic of such a blessing, that it renders law omnipotent and personal privilege quiescent. The monarch may punish an insult offered to his authority, but he must do so by prosecutions in his own courts of law, and by proving the accused party guilty before a jury of his subjects. There is not only the same, but a much stronger reason, why a numerous assembly of the legislature should be constrained to enforce the respect due to their authority or deliberations, when insulted out of their own presence, and not at the moment interfering with their discussions, in the same way : for in their case numbers destroy responsibility without conferring wisdom, while ambition weakens the sense of justice without adding to the capacity for judgment. In this respect there is no difference whether the assembly is of a popular or aristocratic class ; whether it is subject to the caprices of a tyrant majority, or swayed by the influence of a corrupt court. Human nature is always the same, and the danger of tyranny is not the less formidable that its powers are wielded by a multitude of tyrants. Under pretence of maintaining the inviolability of their own privileges, a despotic assembly may entirely extinguish those of their subjects. While professing for themselves the most unbounded freedom of discussion, they may crush all

fearless examination of their conduct by others. Diminution of respect, degradation of authority, need never be apprehended from the legislature claiming no superiority in this respect over the sovereign or the judges of the land. The makers of laws never stand on so lofty a pedestal as when they acknowledge the paramount authority, in the application of these laws, of the courts by which they are administered ; they never descend so low as when they set the first example of violating that general equality which they have proclaimed for their subjects.*

The popular discontents, excited by this ill-timed and doubtfully founded assertion of the powers of sovereignty by the House of Commons, were augmented to an alarming degree by the general distress which prevailed in the manufacturing districts of Great Britain during the latter part of the year 1810 and the whole of 1811. Various causes contributed to produce this distressing result ; but among them the least influence is to be imputed to the Continental System of Napoleon, to which his panegyrists are willing to ascribe the whole. The real causes were very different ; and either arose necessarily from the progress of society, or might have been easily avoided by a more prudent policy on the part of the British merchants and government. Machinery at that period had taken one of its great starts in the application of its powers to manufacturing industry. The mule and the spinning-jenny, the vast improvements of Arkwright and Cartwright, had been added to the immortal discovery of Watt ; and the operative classes, in great part deprived of their employment by the change, brooded in sullen exasperation over innovations which they regarded, not without some show of reason, as destructive of the

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59.
General distress in the manufacturing districts in 1811, and its causes.

* The author cannot dismiss this subject without offering his tribute of praise to the dignified firmness of Mr Sheriff Evans and Mr Sheriff Wheelton, who in 1840 have so nobly vindicated these privileges, and have obtained in consequence a distinguished place in the glorious pantheon of British patriots.

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¹ Parl. Deb.
xxi. 1094,
1163.

60.
Ruinous ef-
fects of the
Orders in
Council.

² Parl. Deb.
xxi. 178.

³ Porter's
Rise, &c. of
Britain, ii.
98. Parl.
Deb. xxi.
1094, 1163.

subsistence of themselves and their families. The vast export trade, which had risen to the unprecedented amount of nearly £47,000,000 sterling in the year 1809, in consequence of the withdrawal of the French coast-guard from northern Germany, to restore the fortunes of the empire on the Danube, had engendered a spirit of speculation which regarded the exports to continental Europe as unbounded, and terminated in a cruel reverse, from the confiscation of a fleet of above three hundred merchantmen, having on board goods to an immense amount, in the Baltic, in November 1810, by order of the Emperor of Russia.¹

But, above all, the cause of this distress was to be found in the loss of the North American market. The natural irritation of the American government at the unbounded vexations to which they had been exposed by both the belligerent powers from the operation of the Berlin and Milan Decrees, and the Orders in Council, had produced, on the part of the government of the United States, the Non-intercourse Act in February 1811, whereby all commercial connexion both with France and England was terminated, and the vast market of the United States, worth all other foreign markets put together, which took off British manufactures to the amount of above thirteen millions sterling, was entirely lost. To complete the causes of general distress which then pressed upon the nation, the harvests of 1810 and 1811 were so deficient, that in the last of these years the importation amounted to 1,471,000 quarters, to purchase which the enormous sum of £4,271,000, chiefly in specie, was sent out of the country.² These causes, joined to the excessive drain of the precious metals arising from the vast expenditure and boundless necessities of the war, both in Germany and the Peninsula, in the year 1809, produced a very great degree of commercial distress through the whole of 1811;³ and the reality of the defalcation, and the alarming decline in the market for

our manufacturing industry, appeared in the most decisive manner from the returns of exports, which sank in that year to twenty-eight millions, being fifteen millions less than in the preceding year, and much lower than they had been since the renewal of the war.*

So general and pressing was the public distress, and so overwhelming, in particular, the embarrassments in which the commercial classes were involved, that parliament, in spring 1811, with great propriety, following the example of 1793, came forward for their relief. In March of that year, the chancellor of the exchequer brought forward a bill for the purpose of authorising government to issue exchequer bills to the mercantile classes to the extent of six millions sterling, the advances to be repaid by instalments at nine and twelve months after receipt. This resolution was agreed to without a division; and, although not more than half of this large sum was actually required or taken up by the community, yet the fact of government coming forward in this way had a most important effect in upholding commercial credit, and preventing the occurrence of one of those panics, so common in subsequent times, which might have proved extremely dangerous at that political crisis to the empire. The stilling of the panic by this interposition of the credit of the exchequer, to extend the currency and support the mercantile part of the community, affords a valuable commentary on the extreme impolicy of the laws in subsequent times, which, on occasion of a similar crisis, so fearfully augmented the public distress by contracting the currency. Little of the money thus advanced was ultimately lost to the community; but it must always be

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61.
Commercial
relief afford-
ed by parlia-
ment.

* Exports (official value) from 1808 to 1812:—

	Foreign and Colonial.	British and Irish.	Total.
1808,	£ 5,776,775	£24,611,215	£30,387,990
1809,	12,750,358	33,542,274	46,292,632
1810,	9,357,435	34,061,901	43,419,336
1811,	6,117,720	22,681,400	28,799,120
1812,	9,533,065	29,508,508	39,041,573

—PORTER'S *Rise and Progress of the Nation*, ii. 98.

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¹ Parl. Deb.
xix. 327,
350.62.
Origin and
progress of
the Luddite
disturbances.

considered as an act highly honourable to the British administration, and a manifestation of the ascendancy of right principles of government in the cabinet, that at a period when they were oppressed by a sinking exchequer and an increasing war expenditure, they came forward with this splendid advance to sustain the mercantile credit, and assuage the manufacturing distress of the community.¹

It may readily be conceived what wide-spread internal distress and discontent so prodigious a diminution in the colonial and manufacturing exports of the kingdom must have occasioned, especially when coming in the nineteenth year of the war, and to a nation already overburdened with excessive and universal taxation. The unhappy operatives who were thrown out of employment, suffering severe distress, and incapable of extending their vision to the wide and far-distant causes which had concurred to produce these calamitous results, conceived that their distresses were entirely owing to the introduction of machinery into the manufactories, and would be relieved by its destruction. To a certain extent, there can be no doubt their ideas were well founded. Machinery, in the later stages of an opulent community, may be indispensable, to enable its master-manufacturers to compete with the fabrics of states where labour is cheaper, because money is scarcer ; but it does so only by throwing a large part of the operatives out of employment. It is seldom that large bodies of men are mistaken in what really presses on their interests. A wide-spread conspiracy was, in consequence, formed for the destruction of the obnoxious frames, which, originating in the weaving districts of Nottinghamshire, soon spread to the adjoining counties of Derby and Leicester, and involved a large part of the manufacturing zone of England in riot and alarm. Undisguised violence, and open assemblages of the disaffected, took place ; but these excesses were speedily suppressed by the interposition of the military.² Upon this the conspirators, who acted in concert, and

² Ann. Reg.
1812, 35,
38. Parl.
Deb. xxi.
807, 820.

took the name of Luddites, from that of General Ludd, their imaginary leader, adopted the more dangerous system of assembling secretly at night, quickly completing the work of destruction, and immediately dispersing before either their persons could be identified, or assistance from the nearest military station procured.

At length, in the winter of 1811, and the spring of 1812, the evil rose to such a height, especially in the great and populous county of York, that it attracted the serious attention of both houses of parliament. Secret committees were appointed in consequence, who collected a large mass of evidence, and made reports of great value on the subject. From the information obtained, it appeared that, though this illegal confederacy had its ramifications through all the central counties of England where manufactories were established, and was organised in the most efficient manner to effect the objects of the conspirators, yet it was almost entirely confined to persons in the very lowest ranks of life, and was rather directed to the immediate objects of riot and plunder than to any general or systematic change in the frame of government. A bill, limited, however, in its duration to the 1st of January 1814, was passed into a law, rendering the breaking of frames a capital offence; and with such energy was this enactment carried into operation, that no less than seventeen men were condemned to death, and executed in the court-yard of the castle of York, at one time, for crimes connected with these disturbances. This dreadful but necessary example had the effect of stopping these dangerous riots, which, like other undisguised inroads on life and property, however formidable in the vicinity where they occur, are never dangerous in a national point of view, if not aided by the pusillanimity or infatuation of the middle and higher ranks. And before the end of the year, all disposition even to these excesses died away, under the cheering influence of the extended market for manufacturing industry,¹ which arose from the opening of

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63.

They come
to a height,
and are sup-
pressed.

Feb. 26.

April 17,
1812.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1812, 35,
38, 132.
Chron. 17,
30. Parl.
Deb. xxi.
807, 840.

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64.

Early his-
tory of Sir
Samuel
Romilly.

the Baltic harbours, and the animating events of the Russian campaign.

Among the senators in the Opposition ranks who distinguished themselves by their resistance to this increase, even for a limited period, of the number of capital offences in English law, and who devoted the energies of a powerful mind and the warmth of a benevolent heart, to the end of his life, to effect the amelioration of its sanguinary enactments, was SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY. This great lawyer, and truly estimable statesman, was of French descent; but his parents had settled in London, where his father carried on business as a jeweller; and he had the merit of raising himself, by his unaided exertions, from the respectable but comparatively humble sphere in which they moved, to the most exalted station in society. He was called to the bar in 1783; and it was impossible that his perseverance and logical precision of argument could have failed of raising him to eminence in that profession, where talent adapted to it seldom fails in the end to overbear all competition. He was highly distinguished, and in great practice in Chancery, before he was heard of beyond the legal circles of the metropolis. His reputation, however, at length procured for him more exalted destinies. In 1806 he was made solicitor-general by Mr Fox, and elevated to the rank of knighthood; and at the same time he took his seat in parliament as one of the members for Queensborough—thus adding another to the long array of illustrious men, on both sides of politics, who have been ushered into public life through the portals of the nomination boroughs, which the Reform Bill has now for ever closed. He took an active part in many of the most important debates which subsequently occurred in parliament, particularly those on the slave-trade, the regency, and Catholic emancipation; and he had already attempted, and in part effected, a great improvement in the law of bankruptcy,¹ by the importation into the English practice of that which had long

¹ 46 Geo.
III. c. 135.
Romilly's
Speeches
and Me-
moir, i. 29.

been established in the statutes of Scotland,* when his attention was attracted by the state of the criminal law ; to the amelioration of which, during the remainder of his parliamentary career, his efforts were chiefly directed.

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His political principles were those of the Whig party ; and though not altogether free from factious ambition, yet the improvement of the human race was the object for which his philanthropic heart beat to the latest hour of existence. He was an amiable and benevolent, but not a great man ; and the publication, in some respects injudicious, of the memoirs of his life, by his sons, has revealed many of the littlenesses, and some of the errors, of humanity. In private life his character was unexceptionable. Exemplary and affectionate in the domestic relations, he contrived, in the midst of all the labours and anxieties consequent on his legal and parliamentary career, to find time for the society of his family. The seventh day of rest was never broken in upon by his labours ; and when making £12,000 a-year at the bar, and actively discharging his duties in the House of Commons, he contrived to keep up his acquaintance with all the literature of the day, as well as the studies of his earlier years—a fact which, however inexplicable to those who are unaccustomed to such exertions, is verified by every day's experience of those who are ; and which arises from the circumstance, that to the mind trained to intellectual toil, recreation is found rather in change of employment, or a new direction being given to thought, than in entire cessation from labour.

65.
His political
principles
and private
virtues.

The condition of the English criminal law at this period was indeed such as to call for the serious attention of every real friend to his country and mankind. Political power having for a long, almost immemorial period, been really vested in the wealthier classes, either of the landed or commercial orders, penal legislation had been mainly directed to the punishment of the crimes

66.
Condition
of English
criminal
law at this
period.

* By Acts 1621, c. 18, and 1696, c. 5.

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which had been found by experience to be dangerous to their possessions, and had, in consequence, been founded on no principle, and regulated by no justice. Every interest in the state, during the course of several centuries, had by turns enjoyed influence sufficient to procure the passing of laws denouncing capital punishments against the perpetrators of crimes peculiarly hostile to its own property; and these successive additions to the penal code were silently acquiesced in by all other classes, upon the understanding that a similar protection would be extended to them when circumstances seemed to render it necessary. Thus the landholders, whose influence had so long been predominant in the Chapel of St Stephen's, had obtained a huge addition to the catalogue of capital punishments for offences trenching on their freeholds. The trading classes had been equally diligent in having the punishment of death affixed to theft from the person, within shops, or from warehouses or manufactories. Shipmasters and merchants had done the same for the protection of their interests; and so strongly were the dangers of forgery felt in a mercantile community, that it had come to pass into a sort of axiom, which obtained universal assent, that nothing but that terrible sanction could preserve from fearful invasion, by means of that crime, the rights of the great body of traders throughout the empire.

67.
Results
which had
arisen from
its neglect.

The result of this separate and selfish system of legislation had come to be, that in 1809, when Sir Samuel Romilly set about the reformation of this blood-stained code, the punishment of death was by statute affixed to above six hundred different crimes, while the increasing humanity of the age had induced so wide a departure from the strict letter of the law, that out of eighteen hundred and seventy-two persons capitally convicted at the Old Bailey in seven years, from 1803 to 1810, for the less grave offences, only *one* had been executed. All those concerned in the prosecution of offences combined

their efforts to mitigate in practice its sanguinary enactments. Individuals injured declined to give information or prosecute, unless in cases of serious injury, or when their passions were strongly roused; witnesses hung back from giving explicit evidence at the trials, lest their consciences should be haunted by the recollection of what they deemed, often not without reason, as little better than judicial murder. Jurymen made light of their oaths, and introduced a most distressing uncertainty into the result of criminal prosecutions. Even judges often caught at the evanescent distinctions which the acuteness of lawyers had made between offences, and willingly admitted the subtleties which were to save the offender's life. The consequence was, that not more than two-thirds of the persons committed for trial were convicted; the remainder, after contracting the whole contagion of a prison, were let loose upon the world, matured in all the habits of iniquity; and the depraved criminals, seeing so many chances of escape before and after apprehension, ceased to have any serious fears for the uncertain penalties of criminal justice.¹

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¹ Romilly's
Speech,
Feb. 9,
1810.
Speeches, i.
106, 107.
Parl. Deb.
xvi. 366,
372.

The principles, on the other hand, for which Sir Samuel Romilly, and, after his lamented death in 1818, Sir James Mackintosh, contended, were, that the essential quality of criminal law, without which all its provisions would be of little avail, was *certainly*; that, to attain this, the cordial co-operation of all classes of society, as well as the activity of the constable and the diligence of the prosecutor, were requisite; that this co-operation could never be secured, unless the punishments affixed by law to offences were such as to offer no violence to the feelings of justice which are found in every bosom; and that these feelings would never have been implanted so strongly as they are in the human heart, if the interests of society had required their perpetual violation. These principles, which require only to be stated to command the cordial assent of every intelligent mind, have since

68.
Principles
for which
Sir Samuel
Romilly and
Sir James
Mackintosh
contended.

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been fully carried into effect in every part of Great Britain ; the penalty of death has come to be practically abolished for almost every offence except murder ; and secondary punishments have been apportioned out, as accurately as the vast simultaneous growth of crime rendered practicable, to the real merits of the offences to which they were affixed. If the result has hitherto exhibited no diminution, but on the contrary been co-existent with a vast increase in the sum-total of delinquencies, it has at least produced, it is to be hoped, a decrease in the more atrocious and violent offences. A much greater degree of certainty has been introduced into criminal proceedings ; and in Scotland, in particular, where the system of penal jurisprudence has long been established on a far better footing than in England, the certainty of punishment to the guilty, and of acquittal to the innocent, has attained a height unparalleled in any other age or country of the globe.* With the diminution of its sanguinary enactments, however, the English criminal law has felt the difficulty of secondary penalties ; the multitude of convicts who required transportation has caused the evils and sufferings of the penal settlements to increase in an alarming degree ; the prisons in the mother country, though greatly enlarged, cannot contain the multitude of offenders ; and society at home, overburdened with a flood of juvenile delinquency, has long laboured under the evils of inadequate jail accommodation, for which all the efforts of philanthropy, and

* Table of the result of criminal commitments in Scotland, England, and Ireland, in the years 1832 and 1837.

	1832.	Committed.	Convicted.	Acquitted.	Proportions of Convictions to Acquittals.
England,	20,829		14,947	3,716	4½ to 1
Ireland,	16,056		9,759	2,449	4 to 1
Scotland,	2,431		1,599	64	24 to 1
1837.					
England,	23,612		17,096	4,388	4 to 1
Ireland,	14,804		9,536	3,011	3½ to 1
Scotland,	3,126		2,358	229	11 to 1

—PORTER'S *Parl. Tables for 1832*, pp. 80, 88 ; and 1837, 117, 118.

all the improvements of prison discipline, have hitherto proved an insufficient remedy.

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69.
Reflections
on this
subject.

In truth, this matter of the entire abolition of capital punishments except in cases of deliberate murder, and the relaxation of secondary penalties from transportation to imprisonment, has now been carried to an excessive length, and it would be well to reconsider the subject before it is too late. Sir Samuel Romilly's principles were strongly recommended by their appeal to humanity, one of the noblest passions which can fill the breast; and unquestionably the English law, when he commenced its reformation, exhibited a hideous mass, in many of its enactments, of unobserved, selfish, and sanguinary legislation. But there is a medium in all things; the bow bent too far one way is apt in its rebound to go too far another. He was misled by the usual error of the virtuous and the benevolent in that, and perhaps in every age—an undue estimate of human nature—when he ascribed the alarming increase of crime then prevalent chiefly to the nominal severity and real uncertainty of criminal law. Its true cause lay much deeper, and was to be found in the native corruption of the human heart, and the tendency of increasing wealth and enhanced desires to bring more vehemently into action its wicked propensities. This is now decisively proved by the result. The new system has been adopted: punishment has been relaxed to a degree probably never contemplated by Romilly or Mackintosh; and the consequence has been an increase of crime unparalleled in English history, and far exceeding any thing known under the more rigid system of former times. It has tripled, and in Scotland nearly quadrupled, in twenty-five years, during which the mild system has been in operation; being a rate of increase in England twice, and in Scotland three times, as great as that of the numbers of the people.*

The conclusion to be drawn from this is, not that we

* See Appendix, A, Chap. LXIV.

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LXIV.1811.
70.Views recommended
by experience on this
subject.

should revert to the old and sanguinary enactments of the eighteenth century, with their occasional severity and general opportunities of escape ; but that, discarding all visionary theories as to the innocence of human nature, and as to all vice being owing to evil communication and erroneous institutions, we should steadily contemplate man as he is—variously compounded of great and noble, and base and vicious inclinations ; the former requiring constant care for their development, the latter springing up unbidden in the human breast. Education, if unaccompanied with sedulous moral training, only aggravates the evil : it puts weapons into the hands of the wicked ; it renders men able and accomplished devils. Acknowledging with humility that it is by the spread of religious instruction and the extension of virtuous habits that the reform which can alone be in the end efficacious, that of the human heart, is to be effected, the wise statesman will not despise the secondary aid which is to be derived from penal law and the justice and solemnity of criminal punishments. And it will probably be found in the end, by general observation, what no small experience in these matters has convinced the author of—that vice in the classes where it is in a manner hereditary, is incapable of reformation by any length even of solitary confinement *at home* ; and that it is in the rigorous and unsparing application of the punishment of transportation that the only effectual remedy for the great and growing evil of constant increase of crime is to be found. And if that system were vigorously carried into execution—if a first imprisonment was in every instance made so long as to teach the young novice in crime an honest trade, and the second conviction invariably followed by removal to a distant colony, the continual stream of depravity which now pollutes the British islands would be lessened ; the offenders would be removed to a sphere where their old connexions would be broken off, and the means of real improvement put in their power ; and the prisons of these

islands would be converted into vast workshops, whence skilled and competent workmen would issue forth to increase and establish our own colonial possessions. To transport a convict at once to Australia costs about £20, little more than the cost of his maintenance for a single year in a British prison;* and from being a pauper or criminal preying on society, he becomes at once a *consumer* of its manufactures to the extent of seven guineas a-year.

Important in their ultimate effects as were these beginnings of interior reformation, of which society, from the important changes which it underwent during the progress of the war, stood so much in need, they yet yielded, in the magnitude of their present consequences, to the three great subjects of internal debate in parliament and the nation during the years 1811 and 1812; viz. the question of the currency, the repeal of the Orders in Council, and the prosecution of the war in the Peninsula. It has been already noticed¹ how Mr Pitt, driven by hard necessity, had adopted the momentous step of suspending cash payments in February 1797; and that, after more than one temporary act had been passed, postponing the period for their resumption, it was at length enacted, by the 44 Geo. III. c. 1, that the restriction in favour of the Bank should continue till six months after the conclusion of a general peace. Allusion has also been more than once made to the prodigious effect which this unavoidable measure had in raising prices and vivifying industry during the war;² and no one can doubt that it was in the great extension of the currency, which took place from 1797 to 1810, that the resources were mainly found which provided both for the long-continued efforts with which the war was attended, and the gigantic expenditure of its later years. Now that the true principles which regulate this important subject have, from long

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1810.

71.

Review of
the measures
of Mr Pitt
connected
with the
currency.

¹ *Ante*, ch.
xxii. §§ 5, 6.

² *Ante*, ch.
xxii. §§ 6,
7; ch. xxxiv.
§§ 101, 102;
ch. xli. §§
67, 68.

* To keep a convict seven years in prison, with all the advantages of his labour, costs about three times what it does to transport him at once to New South Wales.

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1810.

and dear-bought experience, come to be so well understood, it may readily be conceived how the increase of the bank issues, from eleven millions in spring 1797 to twenty-one millions in 1810, and twenty-seven millions in 1815, must have tended both to alter the prices of commodities of all sorts throughout the empire, and to induce the extraordinary and unprecedented vigour which was conspicuous during all that period, both in our foreign commerce and internal industry, and which supported the vast and long-continued national efforts.*

72.
Monetary
changes
during 1809
and 1810.

In the course of the years 1809 and 1810, however, the combination of a variety of causes produced an extraordinary demand for an enlarged currency for domestic transactions, at the very time that the whole gold, and great part of the silver specie of the country were drained off for the purposes of foreign warfare. The prodigious increase in the exports and imports during these years, in consequence of the opening of the German harbours in the former, and of the smuggled trade to the Baltic in the latter, which has been already noticed,¹ necessarily required an extended circulation; and the influence of that demand speedily appeared in the enlarged issue of bank-notes, as well as the extraordinary increase in commercial paper discounted at the Bank of England for the whole of that period; the former of which, from fourteen millions in 1808, had risen to twenty-three millions in the beginning of 1811; while the latter, during the same time, had advanced from thirteen to twenty millions. Yet such was the scarcity of specie in Great Britain during these years, in consequence of the absorbing demand which the Austrian and Spanish wars occasioned for the precious metals, and the necessity of importing above 1,500,000 quarters of grain in 1810 from the bad harvest of that year, that the bullion coined at the Bank during both put together was little more than six hundred thousand pounds. The immense drain of specie to

¹ *Ante*, ch.
lxiv. § 60.

* See Appendix, B, Chap. LXIV.

the Peninsula, to meet the expenses of the war, had gone on progressively increasing, until, in the end of 1810, it had risen to the enormous amount of £420,000 a-month, or £5,040,000 a-year. The money thus required could be transmitted only in coin or bullion, as English paper would not pass in the interior of Spain; and although government made the most strenuous exertions to collect specie for the service of the army, yet they could not by all their efforts obtain it in sufficient quantities; and such as they could get was transmitted at a loss, from the state of the exchanges, of nearly thirty per cent. The demand for specie on the Continent, during and before the Austrian war, had been such, that gold had almost entirely disappeared from circulation, both in France and Germany; and even silver could hardly be procured in sufficient quantities to meet the ordinary necessities either of government or the people.¹

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1810.

¹ Wel. Desp.
April 15.
1810.
Gurw. vi.
37, and vi.
155, 168;
and May
16, 1810, vi.
116, and
June 6,
1810. Bign.
ii. 46.

This singular and anomalous state of matters naturally and strongly roused the attention at once of government, the commercial classes, and all thinking men in Great Britain at this period. The simultaneous occurrence of a vast increase of foreign trade and domestic industry, with a proportional augmentation of the paper currency, and the total disappearance of specie of every kind from circulation, was a phenomenon so extraordinary, that it attracted, as well it might, the anxious attention of the legislature. A committee was appointed to inquire into and report on the subject, in the session of 1810; and it embraced many of the ablest men, on both sides of politics, who then sat in parliament. MR HORNER, whose premature and lamented death, some years afterwards, alone prevented him from rising to the highest eminence on the Opposition side, was the chairman, and took the leading share in the preparation of the memorable report which the committee prepared on the subject. But Mr Canning and MR HUSKISSON were also among its members; and in the intimate connexion which

73.
Impression
it produced
in the legis-
lature.

Feb. 1.

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1810.

¹ Parl. Deb.
xv. 270.
Ann. Reg.
1811, 43.

took place between these eminent men on both sides of politics, during the long and arduous examinations of evidence in the course of their investigations, is to be found the first appearance and unobserved spring of an element in the financial and commercial policy of Great Britain, attended with consequences of unbounded importance in the future history of the British empire. The opinions of the majority of the committee were embodied in certain resolutions, moved by Mr Horner, its chairman, which were strenuously supported by the whole Whig party;* while those of the minority, which were also entertained by government, were embraced in counter-resolutions, brought forward by Mr Vansittart, and backed by all the strength of the administration.¹ †

* Mr Canning in general coincided with the whole views of Mr Huskisson and the majority of the Bullion Committee; and he supported their principles in a speech of uncommon power and singularly lucid argument. But he dissented from them upon one very material practical point, viz. the *period* which it was expedient parliament should fix for the resumption of cash payments. The Committee reported in favour of an unconditional resumption in two years from the time of the debate, (May 1811;) and Mr Huskisson and Mr Horner strenuously contended for that period; but Mr Canning deprecated so sudden a return to a cash standard during the continuance of hostilities, and in lieu proposed that it should take place at the term of six months after a general peace, to which it stood at that time by law limited.—See *Parl. Deb.* xix. 1115-1126.

† The following are the material parts of this memorable report, so important in its future effect on the history and destinies of Great Britain. It affords a curious instance of the disregard of the force of evidence from the influence of speculative opinions.

“I. Your committee have found that the price of gold bullion, which, by the regulations of his majesty’s mint, is £3, 17s. 10½d. per ounce of standard fineness, was during the years 1806, 1807, and 1808, as high as £4 in the market; in 1809 it fluctuated from £4, 9s., to £4, 12s. per ounce. In May 1810 the price was £4, 11s. per ounce. During all these periods the exchanges with the Continent have been very unfavourable to this country.

“II. This extraordinary rise in the price of gold is ascribed by *most of the witnesses* examined by your committee, to an alleged scarcity of that article arising out of an unusual demand for it upon the continent of Europe. This unusual demand is ascribed by some of them as being chiefly for the use of the French armies, though increased also by that state of alarm, and failure of confidence, which leads to the practice of hoarding. Your committee are of opinion, that in the sound and natural state of the British currency, *the foundation of which is gold*, no increased demand for gold from other parts of the world, however great, can have the effect of producing here, for any length of time, a material rise in its market prices. Mr Whitmore, indeed, the late governor of the bank, stated that, in his opinion, it was the high price abroad

On the part of the Opposition, it was urged by Mr Huskisson, Mr Horner, and, with one exception, by Mr Canning:—"The facts on which the present question hinges are sufficiently ascertained, and cannot be disputed on the other side. It appears, from the evidence which was laid before the committee, that, under the existing laws, in force anterior to the period of the bank restriction, no contract or undertaking could be legally satisfied, unless the coin rendered in payment shall weigh in the proportion of $\frac{20}{21}$ parts of 5 pennyweights, 8 grains of standard gold, for each pound sterling; nor in silver coin for any sum exceeding £25, unless such coin shall weigh in the proportion of $\frac{20}{62}$ parts of a pound troy of standard silver for each pound sterling. When it was enacted by

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1810.

74.

Arguments
in favour of
the Bullion
Report by
Mr Horner
and Mr
Huskisson.

which has carried our gold coin out of this country, but he did not offer any proof of this high price.

"III. It appears to your committee, that the difference of exchange arising from the state of trade, and payment between two countries, is limited by the expense of conveying and insuring the precious metals from one country to another; at least that it cannot for any considerable length of time exceed that limit. The real difference of exchange arising from the state of trade and payment never can fall lower than the expense of such carriage, including the insurance.

"IV. Your committee having come to suspect, from the depression of the exchanges and the great rise in the price of gold, that the currency of the country had come to be excessive, were desirous of ascertaining whether the directors of the Bank of England were of the same opinion. The late governor of the bank, however, stated that, in 'regulating the general amount of the loans and discounts, he did not advert to the circumstance of the exchanges—it appearing, upon a reference to the amount of our notes in circulation, and the course of exchange, that they very frequently had no connexion.' Mr Harman, another bank director, said, 'I cannot suppose that the exchanges will be influenced by any modifications of our paper currency.' Your committee, however, are of opinion, that it is a great practical error to suppose that the exchanges with foreign countries, and the price of bullion, are not liable to be affected by the amount of a paper currency not convertible at will into specie. They hold it clear that the exchanges will be lowered, and the price of bullion raised by an issue of such paper to excess.

"V. From several accounts laid before your committee, it appears that, previous to the year 1796, the average circulation of the Bank of England was between £10,000,000 and £11,000,000. But since 1797 it has risen from £13,334,762 to £19,000,000. In addition to this, the circulation of private banks has greatly increased, though no returns have yet ascertained its amount. Upon these grounds your committee are of opinion, that there is at present an excess in the paper circulation of this country, of which the most unequivocal symptom is the very high price of bullion, and next to that the low state of the Continental exchanges: that this excess is to be ascribed to the want of a

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the authority of parliament, in 1797, that the payment of the promissory notes of the Bank of England should be suspended, it was not the intention of the legislature that any alteration should take place in the value of such promissory notes; but it now appears that the actual value of the promissory notes of the Bank of England, measuring such value by weight of standard gold and silver, has, for a considerable period, been much less than what is established by law as the legal tender in payment of any money contract; that the fall which has thus taken place in the value of Bank of England notes, has been occasioned by a too redundant issue of paper currency both by the Bank of England and the country banks; and that the excess has originated in the want of that

sufficient check and control in the issues of paper from the Bank of England, and originally to the suspension of cash payments, which removed the natural and true control. No safe, certain and constantly adequate provision against an excess of paper currency, either occasional or permanent, can be found, except in the convertibility of all such paper into specie. Your committee, however, are of opinion, that the suspension of cash payments cannot be safely removed at an earlier period than *two years from this date*, but that an early provision should be made by parliament, for terminating by the end of that period the operation of the several statutes which have imposed and continued that restriction."—*Parl. Debates*, xvii., *Appendix*, 202, 261.

On the other hand, the material resolutions brought forward by Mr Vansittart were as follows:—

"I. That at various periods, as well before as since the Bank Restriction Act, the exchanges between Great Britain and various other countries have been unfavourable to Great Britain; and during that period, the prices of gold and silver bullion, especially such as could be legally exported, have frequently risen above the mint price.

"II. That this happened especially during the wars of William III. and Queen Anne, during the Seven Years' War, and American war, and also in the years 1795, 1796, and 1797 of the present contest.

"III. That the unfavourable state of the exchanges, and the high price of bullion, do not, in any of the instances above referred to, appear to have been produced by the restriction upon cash payments at the Bank of England, or by any excess in the issue of bank-notes; inasmuch as all these instances, except the last, occurred previous to any restriction on such cash payments; and because the price of bullion has frequently been highest, and the exchanges most unfavourable, when the issues of bank-notes were least.

"IV. That during seventy-eight years, ending with 1st January 1796, and previous to the restriction, the price of standard gold was under the mint price twenty-eight years, and above the mint price forty-nine years. In the three last years of the American war, the price of gold rose to £4, 2s. 3d. per ounce, although the bank-notes in circulation were reduced during the same period from £9,160,000 to £5,995,000.

check on the issues of the Bank of England which existed before the suspension of cash payments.

“The exchanges with foreign countries have, for a considerable period, been unfavourable to this country in the highest degree. But although the adverse circumstances of our trade, and the large amount of our military expenditure abroad, may have contributed to turn our exchanges with the Continent of Europe against us; yet the extraordinary degree in which they have been depressed for so long a period can have been caused only by the depreciation which has arisen in the relative value of the currency, as compared with the money of foreign countries. The only way of guarding against these manifold dangers is by a vigilant watch being kept up by the Bank

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75.

Unfavour-
able state of
the foreign
exchanges.

“V. That, in consequence of the extraordinary violence and rigour with which the war against this country has been conducted by the French government, the ordinary trade of the country has been greatly deranged, and an export of the precious metals, which alone would be taken on the Continent in exchange, substituted for the export of our manufacture. That in addition to this, the naval and military expenditure of the United Kingdom in foreign parts has been very great during the last three years, especially in specie; and that the price of grain has been higher, and the importation larger, during that time than at any period since the scarcity of 1801.

“VI. That the amount of currency necessary for carrying on the transactions of the country must bear a proportion to the amount of its trade, public revenue, and expenditure; and the average value of the exports and imports, revenue, and expenditure, and bank-notes of Great Britain, for three years before 1797, stood thus:—

Before 1797.	Official value.
Imports and exports, average of three years, . . .	£48,752,000
Revenue, including loans, ...	37,169,000
Expenditure, ...	42,855,000
Bank-notes in circulation, ...	10,782,000
Coined in George III.'s reign, ...	57,274,617

“VII. That the same averages on three years, ending 5th January 1811, stood thus:—

Imports and exports, ...	£77,971,000
Revenue, ...	62,763,000
Loans, ...	12,673,000
Expenditure, ...	82,205,000
Bank-notes, ...	19,549,180
Gold coin in circulation much decreased.	

“VIII. That the situation of the kingdom, in respect of its political and commercial relations with foreign countries, is sufficient, without any changes in the internal value of its currency, to account for the unfavourable state of the exchanges and the high price of bullion.

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of England on the foreign exchanges, as well as the price of bullion, with a view to regulate the amount of its issues. But the only certain mode of providing against an excess of paper currency, is by establishing by law the legal convertibility upon demand of all such currency into the lawful coin of the realm. It may not be expedient to make such a change suddenly, but it must be done ere long; and two years appears to be a reasonable time within which the alteration may with safety be effected, instead of the period of six months after the ratification of a definite treaty of peace, which at present is established by law. The necessity of having recourse to such a measure is obvious. A pound of gold, and £46, 14s. 6d. being equal to each other, and in fact the same thing under different names, any circulating medium which purports to represent that amount of silver ought by law to be exchangeable at will for a pound of gold. But under the operation of the Bank Restriction Act, a pound of gold has now come to be equivalent to £56 in paper currency. The difference, therefore, between £56 and £46, 14s. 6d.—or £9, 5s. 6d.—is the measure of the depreciation of the currency, or the amount which every creditor in an old obligation, dated prior to the year 1797, to the extent of £56, loses, if his debtor now pays up his debt in the paper currency—that is to say, every

“IX. That though it is important, that the restriction on payments in cash should be removed as soon as the political and commercial circumstances of the country shall render it compatible with the public interest; it would be highly inexpedient and dangerous to fix a definite period for the removal of the restriction on cash payments prior to the time already fixed by 44 Geo. III. c. i., or six months after a general peace.”—*Parl. Debates*, xix. 70–74.

The whole of this great question of the currency, attended with effects of such immense importance, both during the war and since the return to cash payments by the act of 1819, since the peace, is to be found summed up in these able resolutions on both sides. They deserve the most serious consideration from all interested in their country's welfare; for, beyond all doubt, as it was only by the legislature following Mr Vansittart's principles that the nation was brought victorious through the war, so by the adoption of those of the bullion committee, by the acts of 1819 and 1844, it has been reduced to difficulties which now threaten its existence, and in their ultimate effects, if persisted in, must destroy the British empire.

creditor of that standing loses just a fifth by the present state of matters.

“It would be monstrous to imagine that so gross an injustice ever was intended by parliament, when they established as a temporary measure, and under the pressure of unavoidable necessity, the currency of bank paper as a legal tender. What could have been the consistency of the legislature, which, leaving unrepealed and unmodified the regulations which take away the character of a legal tender from every guinea weighing less than the legal standard of 5 dwt. 8 grains, should give it to a bank-note, purporting to be of the same denomination, but the real value of which at this moment is only 4 dwts. 14 grains, or, in other words, about three shillings *less* than the lightest guinea which is allowed to pass in payment? Yet this is precisely what the act of 1797 has now come in practice to produce; and the question is, whether this anomalous and unjust state of matters can be allowed to continue. To sell or to buy guineas at a higher rate than 21s. each, in bank paper, is an offence at present punishable by fine and imprisonment; but though the penalties attach to the unhappy holder of a *heavy* guinea, the fortunate possessor of a *light* one is entitled by law to sell it for what it will bring, which is about 24s. 3d. Can there be a more absurd state of matters, or one more directly operating as a bounty on clipping, defacing, and melting down the coin; and need it be wondered at, if, with such temptations held out by the operation of law to the commission of these offences, the gold coin has entirely disappeared from circulation?

“By the common consent of mankind in all civilised countries, the precious metals have been received as the fittest standard for measuring the value of all other commodities, and are employed as the universal equivalent for effecting their exchange. Gold in this country, as silver is in Hamburg, is really and exclusively the fixed measure of the rising and falling in value of all other

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1810.

76.

Injustice
which has
accrued
from the de-
preciation
of the paper
currency.

77.

Gold as the
standard of
value.

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commodities in reference to each other. The article itself which forms this standard never can rise or fall with reference to this measure—that is, with reference *to itself*. A pound-weight of gold can never be worth a pound and a quarter of gold. A bank-note, on the other hand, is not a commodity—it is only an engagement for the payment of a certain specified quantity of money. It cannot vary its value in the exchange for any commodity, except in reference to the increase or diminution of such commodity in gold. Gold, therefore, is the test by which the value of bank-notes must be tried; and if a bank-note, as stated by the witnesses in the evidence, instead of being worth the standard value of 5 dwt. 3 grains of gold, is only worth 4 dwt. 8 grains—it is really worth only the latter amount of gold in exchange for any other commodity. A general increase of prices, therefore, is not an indication of the depreciation of the currency. Such an effect may be produced by many other causes, as, for example, an increase in the supply of the precious metals; but every considerable or durable increase in the price of the precious metals, which form the basis of a currency, cannot be ascribed to anything but the depreciation of such currency, even if the price of all other commodities were to be falling at the same time.

78.
Causes of
the deprecia-
tion of the
currency at
various
times.

“Depreciation of a currency may be produced either by the standard coin containing less of the precious metal which forms that standard than it is certified by law to contain, or by an excess in the amount of that currency. The first effect took place to a great extent in the reign of William III., when the proportion of precious metals in the current coin was about thirty per cent less than it was certified to contain. To that evil a remedy was applied by the recoinage in 1773, and since that time this evil has not been felt in this country. The existing depreciation, therefore, must be occasioned by excess. Such depreciation cannot exist for any length of time in any country, unless its currency consists partly of paper,

partly of the precious metals. If the coin itself be undervalued, but nevertheless the currency is so, which is the present case, that can arise only from an excess in the paper circulating at par with the coin. The necessary effect of such a state of things is, that gold will be sent abroad to the better markets which are there to be found. And the only possible way of applying a remedy to this evil is to compel the bank to pay in gold, and give the market price for guineas. By so doing, indeed, you will at first subject that establishment to a loss equal to the difference between the market and the mint price of that metal; but the effect of this will be, in the end, to force it to contract its issues and restore the value of the currency; and, till that is done, whatever it gains by avoiding this liability is just so much lost to the holders of its notes.”¹

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¹ Parl. Deb.
xix. 798,
1098. Hus-
kisson's
Speeches, i.
57, 123.

On the other hand, it was maintained by Mr Vansittart and Lord Castlereagh:—"It is a matter of equal regret and surprise to behold a committee composed of gentlemen so sagacious and well-informed, so conversant with business, and respectable in every point of view, arriving at conclusions so very opposite to those which the evidence before the committee, as well as the good sense of the nation, has long since pointed out for general adoption. The last resolution is the substantial practical recommendation of the Bullion Committee; the other resolutions are only explanatory and introductory, and might, with perfect innocence and safety, be placed unanimously on the journals. It is the resumption of cash-payments, within a definite and not distant period, which is the real point at issue; and all argument is misapplied which is not directed, in the first as well as last instance, to that leading point. We are all agreed that a mixed circulation of bank-notes, convertible at pleasure into cash and coin, is the most desirable circulating medium which can be conceived; because, if properly regulated, it possesses the solidity of a metallic with the cheapness

79.
Arguments
against it
by the Min-
isterial
party.

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1811.

80.
State of the
metallic
currency
of the
kingdom.

of a paper currency. We differ only about the means, and the fit season, for returning to this state. The Bullion Committee are for attempting it positively and absolutely, without regard to consequences, or even practicability ; we are for waiting till a violent and unnatural state of things shall have ceased, during the continuance of which our object cannot be gained, while the attempt to accomplish it would only aggravate the evil.

“ The foundations of all our reasonings on this subject must be an appeal to experience ; and the resolutions which we are to submit to the House are, therefore, not abstract propositions, but a statement of facts. The fundamental position on the other side, viz., that there is a certain fixed and definite standard of value, arising from a given weight and purity of the precious metals being used in the formation of coin in this country, is erroneous. Any sum under £25 may, it is notorious, be legally discharged in silver coin ; and such is the degree in which the silver coin of various denominations now current has been worn away by use, or diminished by fraud, that the actual amount of silver which a creditor holding an obligation under that sum will receive, may vary from 5 lb. 5 oz. 15 dwt. to 8 lb. 15 dwt., according as he receives his payment in the worn sixpence or the fresh crown-pieces of the realm. The act of 1774, limiting the legal tender of silver to sums below £25, expired in 1783 ; and from that time down to 1798, obligations to any amount might have been discharged in these clipped and worn-out sixpences, then current : and such coins are still in practice the great circulating medium by which the transactions of the country are carried on. Even in regard to the gold coin, no fixed standard was introduced till 1774 ; so that all the boasted fixity of that part of the currency dates only from that comparatively recent period.

“ The right of establishing and regulating the legal money of the kingdom, at all times vested in the sove-

reign or the crown, with concurrence of parliament, cannot be abrogated except by the same authority. The promissory-notes of the Bank of England, however, have hitherto passed in common estimation, and in the usual transactions of men, as equivalent to gold; although at various periods, both before and after the bank restriction, the exchanges between Great Britain and other countries have been unfavourable to Great Britain; and, as a matter of course, in such periods the market prices of gold and silver have risen considerably above the mint prices, and the coinage of money at the mint has been unavoidably either partially or wholly suspended. Such unfavourable exchanges and rises in the price of bullion have usually occurred in the course of foreign wars, when the greater part of the metallic currency was carried abroad to conduct the operations of our fleets and armies; as during the wars of William III. and Queen Anne, the greater part of the Seven Years' War, and the American war. These causes all conspired together to produce the extraordinary pressure upon the bank in February 1797, and rendered unavoidable the suspension of cash-payments at that period: and they again occurred with still greater severity in the two years which preceded the peace of Amiens. In these instances, the unfavourable state of the exchanges, and the high price of bullion, do not appear to have been produced by the restriction of cash-payments, or any excess in the issue of notes; inasmuch as all the instances, except the last, occurred previously to any restriction on such cash-payments; and because the price of bullion has frequently been highest, and the exchanges most unfavourable, at periods when the issues of the bank-notes have been considerably diminished, and they have been afterwards restored to their ordinary rates though those issues have been increased.

“During seventy-eight years, ending with January 1797, the price of gold has been at and under the mint

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1811.

81.

Effects of
the state of
the foreign
exchange
on the cur-
rency.

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LXIV.1811.
82.
Prices of
gold at
various
times.

price for twenty-eight years, and above the mint price fifty years ; and during that period the price of standard silver has been at and under the mint price three and two months only. The exchange with Hamburg fell, during the three latter years of the American war, full eight per cent, and the price of foreign gold rose from £3, 17s. to £4, 2s. an ounce, and the price of dollars nearly in the same proportion ; while the bank-notes in circulation were, during the same period, diminished from nine to six millions. Again, in December 1804, the rate of exchange with Hamburg rapidly rose to 34, and the price of gold fell to its former standard of £3, 17s. before February 1787. The amount of bank-notes in February 1787 was £8,600,000, and in February 1791, £11,700,000 ; and between these years the sum of £10,700,000 was coined in gold, and yet the exchange with Hamburg rose three per cent. The bank-notes, which in February 1795 were £11,500,000, were reduced in February 1797 to £8,600,000, during which time the exchange with Hamburg fell three per cent ; and on the 1st February 1798, they were increased to £13,200,000, during which period the exchange had risen nine per cent. Examples of this sort prove to a demonstration how extremely fallacious is the idea that the unfavourable state of the foreign exchanges is to be ascribed to any excess in the issues of paper at home : they show that the exchanges depend on a variety of other circumstances independent of the home currency, and not unfrequently they are highest when the paper circulation is most abundant.

83.
Influence on
them of the
state of our
foreign rela-
tions.

“ It is not difficult to perceive what are the circumstances in our foreign relations which have produced the present unfavourable state of the exchanges. The trade with the Continent has, from the effect of Napoleon’s decrees against British commerce, become hazardous and expensive ; it is everywhere loaded with excessive charges : the trade with America has been precarious and interrup-

ted ; the naval and military expenditure has for some years been very great ; and the price of grain, owing to a succession of bad crops, has during the same period been very high. Any of these causes is sufficient to account for the drain of specie from this country ; much more the whole of them taken together. The amount of the currency of the country must bear a certain proportion to its trade, revenue, and expenditure. Now, the average amount of exports, imports, and revenue of England, for some years past, has been so great as absolutely to require an enlarged circulation ; for all the three have nearly doubled since the period when the bank restrictions were first imposed. If the average amount of bank-notes in circulation at the two periods is compared, it will be found not to have advanced in the same proportion.* And how, when our metallic currency was drawn abroad by the necessities of foreign commerce and warfare, was the ordinary circulation of the country to be supplied, and its immense transactions conducted, if the increase in bank-notes, now so loudly complained of, had not taken place ? The extraordinary circumstances in which the kingdom has lately been placed, therefore, are amply sufficient to account for the unfavourable state of the exchanges, without any change in the internal value of the currency, or any reason being afforded for its contraction. It is highly important, indeed, that the restriction as to payments in cash should be removed as soon as the political and commercial relations of the country shall render it compatible with the public interest ; but under the present situation of the state, in all these particulars, it would be highly dangerous to do so before the period

* Average exports and imports of Great Britain during three years before
 February 1797, . . . £48,732,000 1811, £77,981,000
 Expenditure, . . . 42,855,000 82,205,000
 Bank-notes, . . . 10,782,000 19,541,000

No less than £57,000,000 worth of gold coin had been coined during the reign of George III., of which a large portion was in circulation at the first of these periods, but a very small portion only at the second.—See MR VANSITTART'S *Resolution*, May 13, 1811 ; *Parl. Deb.* xx. 73, 74.

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LXIV.

1811.

84.

True nature
of the depre-
ciation of the
currency.

fixed by law, namely, six months after the conclusion of a definitive treaty of peace.

“There is a depreciation of bank-notes compared with legal coin, and there is a depreciation compared with the price of commodities. But the depreciation on which the Bullion Report so largely dwells, is a depreciation different from either of these. It is a depreciation compared with the money of other countries. What is the meaning of such a depreciation, when no one ever imagined that Bank of England paper could pass current anywhere but in Great Britain? What would be the effect of an order upon the Bank, just now, to resume cash payments in two years? Would it not be to compel them to purchase gold coin at any loss, in order to meet the certain drain about to come upon them? All the witnesses examined before the committee agree in this, that there is an irresistible tendency at present in the guineas of England to go abroad. Some ascribe it to the necessity of cash remittances to meet the balance of trade, others to the demand for gold on the Continent; but all concur in the fact, and the state of the foreign exchanges sufficiently demonstrates its reality. How, then, is the Bank of England to be able singly to stand the torrent produced by the commercial and political relations of the whole globe? Is it fair, equitable, or prudent, to expose that establishment to the certainty of the enormous loss consequent on such a contest? And is this a time to make an experiment so hazardous to the solvency of government and the credit of the nation, when the empire is engaged in the eighteenth year of a costly war, waged for its very existence, and every guinea that can be spared from its domestic necessities is absolutely requisite to maintain the expensive contest in the Peninsula, which alone averts the horrors of invasion from the British shores?”

¹ Mr Vansittart's Resolutions, May 9 and 13, 1811. Parl. Deb. xix. 919, 967, 1128; xx. 73, 74, 128.

Upon a division, Mr Horner's resolutions were lost by a majority of seventy-six—the numbers being seventy-five to one hundred and fifty-one; and the counter-

resolutions of Mr Vansittart were, a few days after, carried by a majority of forty — the numbers being forty-two to eighty-two.

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1811.

Few subjects in the modern history of England have been discussed both in and out of parliament with more vehemence and ability than this Bullion Report ; and none was ever fraught, both in its immediate and ultimate effects, with more momentous consequences. In fact, the very existence of the nation was at stake in the discussion ; and it may now with safety be pronounced, that if the arguments urged by Mr Horner, Mr Huskisson, and the bullion committee had proved successful, and parliament had acted upon their recommendations, the national independence must have been destroyed, and England rendered a province of France long before the Moscow catastrophe arrived. The very fact on which their whole argument was rested, viz. that the difference between the market and the mint price of guineas had come to be twenty-five per cent, was decisive against the practicability of restoring cash payments, at least till the pressure of the war had come to an end. For what must have been the effect of a compulsitor to pay in gold purchased by the bank at such a loss, and issued to the public at such a profit ? Evident ruin to that establishment, bankruptcy to the government, and an abandonment of all the enterprises, vital to the state, in which the empire was engaged. Wellington, deprived of all his pecuniary resources in Spain, would have been compelled to withdraw from the Peninsula. In the mortal struggle between domestic insolvency and disaster abroad, all our foreign efforts must have been abandoned. A force paralysing him at home as great as that which drew back Hannibal from the scene of his victories in Italy, would have forced the British hero from the theatre of his destined triumphs in Spain. The crash in England would have come precisely at the crisis of the war ; cash payments would have been resumed in May 1813, just after

85.
Reflections
on this sub-
ject. Dan-
gers of re-
sumption of
cash pay-
ments at
this period.

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the battle of Lützen, and on the eve of the armistice of Prague ; Napoleon, relieved from the pressure of Wellington's veterans, would have made head against the forces of the north ; Austria, in such unpromising circumstances, would never have joined the coalition ; Russia, exhausted and discouraged, would have retired to her forests ; Germany, unarrayed by British subsidies, would have remained dormant in the strife ; and the sun of European freedom would have sunk beneath the wave of Gallic ambition.

86.
Its effects
on the finan-
ces of Great
Britain.

Even if, by prudential measures and great efforts on the part of the government and the bank, an immediate catastrophe had been avoided, there can be no doubt that the resumption of cash payments at that crisis must, at no distant period, have proved fatal to the finances and public credit of Great Britain. Experience has now cast a broad and steady light on this subject. It is known that the adoption of this step in 1819, enforced and carried out as it was by the suppression of small notes in 1826, changed prices at least forty per cent ;* that the holders of commodities and property of all descriptions found their capital diminished by that amount in the course of a few years ; that debts, augmented in the same proportion, speedily proved fatal to all the overburdened fortunes, whether in land or money, over the country ; that bankruptcies, to an unparalleled extent, diffused ruin and misery through the industrious classes ; and that the general distress and difficulties of the middle ranks of society produced that wide-spread feeling of discontent, which, ignorant of the real cause of its suffering, and fanned into a flame by the spirit of faction, gave rise to the conflagration which brought about the great organic change of 1832. If such have been the effects of this momentous step in a period of profound peace, universal commerce, and comparatively

* See Alison's *England in 1815 and 1845*, the Table at end — where this is demonstrated by the prices given for fifty years back.

light national burdens, what must have been its results if it had occurred in the crisis of the war, and in the presence of Napoleon, with the income-tax forcibly extracting all the surplus profits of the people, commerce to continental Europe almost closed by the military power of France, and a gigantic naval and military establishment exhausting all the resources of the state, and yet alone preserving the nation from foreign subjugation ?

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1811.

The fundamental error of Mr Huskisson and the bullion committee on this subject consisted in the principles, which they laid down as axioms, that the measure of the depreciation of the currency was to be found in the difference between the market and the mint price of gold ; and that the cause of the high price of the precious metals was to be sought for in the over-issue of paper rather than the absorption of specie by foreign states. Both positions, it has now been proved by experience, were erroneous, or rather embraced only a part of the truth ; and, what is singular enough, the first erred chiefly from underrating the depreciation arising from excessive issue, on which the bullion committee themselves so strongly founded. Assuming the depreciation to be measured by the difference between the market and the mint price of gold, that is between £46, 14s. 6d., and £56, they estimated it at 25 per cent, whereas there can be no doubt that it was at that period nearer 75 per cent ; and a revulsion of prices in most articles, to more than half that amount, took place upon the resumption of cash payments when the bill of 1819 came into operation, even during a period of profound peace. In fact, the relative money and mint price of the *precious metals* had nothing to do with the question of depreciation of the currency ; for, as bank-notes never sank in value compared with specie, whatever party-spirit may have affirmed to the contrary, the measure of the depreciation which undoubtedly took place was to be sought

87.
Errors of Mr
Huskisson
and his
party.

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LXIV.

1811.

for, not in the relative value of the metallic and paper currency, but in the diminished value of the *whole currency*, gold, silver, and paper, when compared with that of all other commodities. And the proof of that was to be found in the fact, not that gold was at a premium of 25 per cent, but that wheat had, on an average of ten years preceding, advanced 100 per cent, and was then selling at 110 shillings the quarter, whether paid in bank-notes or gold. The high premium on gold, on which so much stress was laid, was evidently owing to the political or natural causes which at that period caused the precious metals to be all drained out of the country; and we who have seen the bank of England reel, and the United States bank of America fall,* under the effects of the drain of £6,000,000 sterling from the vaults of the former of these establishments to purchase grain from continental Europe in 1839, for the consumption of the British islands, and the Bank Charter Act suspended, and a commercial crisis, of unheard-of severity, induced in 1848, in consequence of the drain of gold to buy the grain imported to meet the failure of the potato crop in the preceding year, can feel no surprise that gold was at an extravagant premium in 1810 and 1811 in London, when £4,171,000 was, in the former of these years, sent out of the country for grain alone; and in both years, above £6,000,000 was annually remitted to the Peninsula, in specie and bullion, for the service of the English and Portuguese armies.

It is remarkable that a measure fraught, as every one, unbiassed by party feeling or interest, now sees, with such obvious and utter ruin, both to the nation and the individuals of whom it is composed, was at that period

* In Mr Biddle's able paper on the causes of the suspension of cash payments by the United States Bank in October 1839, the principal reason assigned was the drain upon the Bank of England during the preceding year, from the vast importation of grain, in consequence of the bad harvest in Great Britain in 1838, and the consequent contraction of the British circulating medium and pressure upon the money market of America.

supported by the ablest men in parliament, and many of the profoundest thinkers in the country ; that the report which recommended such a perilous and destructive change was for above twenty years held up as the model of political wisdom ; and that the ministry who, by resisting it, saved their country from destruction, more perhaps than by any act in their whole career, incurred the imputation, with the great bulk of the succeeding generation, of being behind the lights of the age. It is the more inexplicable, that the general delusion should so long have prevailed on the subject, when it is recollected, not only that the true principles of this apparently difficult but really simple branch of national economy, which are now generally admitted by all impartial thinkers, were at the time most ably expounded by many men both in and out of parliament ;* but that, in the examination of some of the leading merchants of London before the parliamentary committees on the subject, the truth was told with a force and a precision which it now appears surprising any one could resist.† This memorable example should always be present to the minds of all who are called upon, either theoretically or practically, to deal with so momentous a subject as the monetary concerns of a nation ; and, while it is calculated to inspire distrust in abstract or speculative conclusions, when unsupported by facts, it points in the clearest manner to the wisdom of adhering to those common-sense views which experience has suggested to

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LXIV.1811.
88.Long-con-
tinued pub-
lic delusion
on this
subject.

* Particularly by Sir John Sinclair, whose sagacious mind early and clearly perceived the fatal effect of the proposed resumption of cash payments at that critical period, especially on that great national interest, agriculture, to the support and improvement of which his long and useful life was devoted.—See *Life of Sir John Sinclair*, ii. 268, by his son, the Rev. John Sinclair, chaplain to the Bishop of London—a work full of valuable information both historical and political, by an author who unites to the talents and industry hereditary in his family, the accomplishments of a scholar, the learning of a divine, and the philanthropy of a Christian.

† The following was the evidence given on the subject of the high price of bullion by Mr Chambers, before the Committee of the House of Commons.

In the examination of Mr Chambers, a gentleman who deservedly enjoys the reputation of great intelligence and extensive information in the commercial

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practical men, and which, however apparently irreconcilable at the moment with theoretical principle, will generally be found to emanate from it in the end, and to have arisen from some unobserved element acting, with a force imperceptible to the theorist, but most cogent to the practical man, on the great and complicated maze of human transactions.

89.
Birth and
early his-
tory of Mr
Huskisson.

WILLIAM HUSKISSON, who first rose to great and deserved celebrity in the course of these important discussions, was a statesman whose career belongs to the pacific but momentous period which intervened between the close of the war and the passing of the Reform Bill. But he was too eminent a man, and exercised too powerful an influence on the fortunes of his country, to be passed over without remark in the annals of Europe during the French Revolution. He was descended from a family of ancient standing but moderate fortune in Staffordshire, and received the elements of education in his native county. He was early sent over to receive the more advanced branches of instruction at Paris, under the direction of Dr Gem, physician to the British embassy at that metropolis; and he arrived there in 1789, just in time to witness, and in some degree share, the enthusiasm excited by the capture of the Bastille in that year.¹ The intimate acquaintance which at this period he formed with Franklin and Jefferson, as well as the popular leaders in the Club of 1789, of

¹ Huskisson's
Speeches
and Life,
i. 1, 49.

world, we find the following evidence :—"At the mint price of standard gold in this country, how much gold does a Bank of England note for one pound represent?"—"Five dwts. three grains."—"At the present market price of £4, 12s. per ounce, how much gold do you get for a bank-note of one pound?"—"Four dwts. eight grains."—"Do you consider a Bank of England note for one pound under these present circumstances as exchangeable in gold for what it represents of that metal?"—"I do not conceive gold to be a fairer standard for Bank of England notes than indigo or broad cloth." Question repeated, "If it represents twenty shillings of that metal at the coinage price, it is not."—HUSKISSON'S *Life*, i. 36. Mr Huskisson adds, in these answers this leading doctrine is manfully and ingenuously asserted and maintained; and all who stand up for the undepreciated value of bank paper, however disguised their language, must ultimately come to the same issue.—*Ibid.*

which he was a member, had a powerful influence on his character, which was never obliterated through life, and eventually exercised no inconsiderable effect on the fortunes of his country, to the chief direction of the commercial concerns of which his abilities ultimately raised him.

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He was first brought into parliament in the close of the year 1796, for the borough of Morpeth, under the nomination of Lord Carlisle; and was about the same time appointed Under-secretary of State for War and the Colonies, in which laborious and important situation his business talents were speedily discovered, and he enjoyed the intimate friendship, and was often called to the private counsels, both of Mr Dundas and Mr Pitt. He retired from office with Mr Pitt in 1801, along with Mr Canning, with whom, throughout life, he maintained the closest intimacy; but was reinstated in the situation of Secretary to the Treasury on Mr Pitt's return to power in 1804; which important trust he continued to hold, with the exception of the brief period when the Whigs were in power, down to the retirement of Mr Canning from Downing Street in September 1809, when he withdrew from government with his brilliant friend, and became a leading member of the liberal section of the Tory party, now in avowed hostility to the administration. In 1814 he was appointed a Commissioner of the Woods and Forests, and from that time till his appointment to the important office of President of the Board of Trade in January 1823, he devoted his attention almost exclusively to subjects of trade, navigation, and political economy, in which his information gave him great weight, and of which, even before he became a cabinet minister, he had acquired almost the exclusive direction. The return to cash payments, by the celebrated bill of 1819, the reciprocity treaties, the partial abandonment of the navigation laws, and the free-trade system, were mainly occasioned by his influence;¹ and he continued, whether in or out of

90.
His first
entry into,
and career
in parlia-
ment.

¹ Huskisson's Mem.
i. 235;
Speeches
and Life,
vol. i.

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office, almost entirely to direct the commercial concerns of the nation, till the time of his death, which was occasioned by the frightful accident of the railway train passing over him on the 15th September 1830, the day on which the line from Liverpool to Manchester was opened.

91.
His character and great abilities.

He was the first of that class of statesmen who have arisen with the prodigious increase in the commercial transactions and industrial activity of Great Britain in later times, and whose attention is chiefly devoted to the material interests and statistical details of the nation. He was not endowed by nature with any remarkable oratorical abilities; he had great powers of thought and application, but neither the fire of genius, the gift of original thought, nor the soul of poetry, in his character. And though in the later years of his life he was listened to with profound attention on both sides of the house, yet this respect was owing rather to the vast stores of varied information which he never failed to bring to bear upon the subject of debate, and the luminous views which he advanced regarding it, than to any faculty of captivating a mixed audience with which he was gifted. His reasoning faculties were of a very high order; and there is no statesman of that period to whose arguments the historian can now so well refer for an exposition of the principles which, during the interval between the peace and the Reform Bill, governed the commercial and maritime policy of England. He first brought to bear upon legislative measures the resources of statistical research; and, to the industry and perseverance requisite for such an undertaking, he united the rarer faculty of philosophic reflection, and the power of deducing general principles from an immense detail of particular instances. He was never taken unawares on any subject of that description; the details of the parliamentary returns were ever present to his memory; and, by the skilful use which he made of them

in debate, he acquired, for the last ten years of his career, a weight in the House of Commons on all subjects connected with trade and navigation which was wellnigh irresistible.

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Adam Smith has said that he had no great faith in political arithmetic ; and although nothing is more certain than that the principles of the Baconian philosophy will be found in the end to be applicable to this, as to every other subject of human inquiry, and that a careful examination of facts is the only sure test of the truth or falsehood of any particular opinion, yet here, as elsewhere, principle must be the guide to inquiry. It is only by persons thoroughly imbued with rational views that these valuable results can be obtained ; while, to the world in general, statistical returns will present an unmeaning mass of figures, and to the speculative politician they may often become a fruitful source of error. Statistics are to the science of politics what the observations of Tycho Brahe were to astronomy ; but it requires the mind of a Kepler to deduce from them the true philosophic conclusions. The reason is, not that the returns are incorrect, or the figures err, but that such a variety of circumstances enter into the formation of the general result, that the chances are, that, in the outset of statistical inquiry, and before the true causes have been separated from the imaginary ones by experience, conclusions altogether fallacious will often be deduced from perfectly correct premises. Certain it is, that, with all the accuracy and extent of Mr Huskisson's information on mercantile subjects, and all the force of his reasoning powers, his conclusions were in great part erroneous ; and that to his influence, more perhaps than that of any other individual, is to be ascribed the false direction of British policy for the last twenty years, alike in regard to monetary, commercial, and colonial affairs. Experience, the great test of truth, has now demonstrated this in the most decisive manner.

92.
His errors.

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93.

His erroneous political principles, and their destructive effects.

He strenuously advocated the return to a metallic currency in 1819, before any serious progress had been made in the reduction of the debt contracted during the paper one ; and the result has been that the nation has been permanently disabled from paying it off ; and the fall in the money price of all property to the extent of above a third, while all debts, public and private, remained at their former amount, produced such a storm of discontent as ten years afterwards overthrew the old constitution of the empire. He strenuously advocated the conclusion of reciprocity navigation treaties with the powers of northern Europe ; and the result has been that our shipping with them has been reduced in twenty years to a fourth of its amount, while theirs with us has been quadrupled in the same period, without any advantage whatever having been gained for our manufacturing interests to counterbalance so serious a disadvantage. He strenuously advocated the reduction of the duties on various articles of foreign manufacture ; and the result has been that a severe wound has been inflicted on domestic industry, without foreign jealousy having in so much as a single instance relaxed aught of the burdens on British productions. He strenuously advocated the propitiation of foreign mercantile powers in the same stage of civilisation as ourselves, even if the consequence should be the discouragement and irritation of our own colonies ; and the result has been, without the slightest relaxation of the prohibitions of the former, a general neglect of those vast colonial interests in which Great Britain can alone find a permanent market for its manufactures, and which, according as they were attached by durable cords to the parent state, or severed from it, must ultimately become either an unbounded source of its strength or the immediate cause of its ruin.*

Another subject which occupied a large portion of the attention of parliament, during the years 1811 and 1812,

* See Appendix, C, Chap. LXIV.

was the repeal of the Orders in Council, which was now anxiously pressed upon government, both by the Opposition and the principal manufacturing cities in the empire : and in the discussions on which a statesman reserved for high destinies in future days, HENRY BROUGHAM, first rose to distinguished eminence. It has been already noticed, that the British government—justly irritated at the Berlin and Milan decrees, which Napoleon, in the intoxication consequent on the overthrow of Prussia in 1806, had fulminated against English commerce—issued the celebrated Orders in Council, which in effect declared that no ship belonging to any neutral power should be permitted to enter the ports of any country under the government of France, unless it had previously touched at a British harbour.¹ Between these rigorous orders on the one hand, and the peremptory French decrees on the other, the trade of neutral states was wellnigh destroyed ; for they had no means of avoiding the penalty of confiscation denounced against them by the one power, but by adopting a course which immediately exposed them to the same risk from the other. The only neutral power which at this period carried on any considerable carrying trade was America ; but it did so to a great extent, and that commerce promised daily to become greater and more profitable to its citizens, from the mutual rage of the belligerents, which threw the only traffic that could be maintained between them into the hands of the only neutral state in existence.

Deeply, therefore, did both the people and government of the United States feel themselves injured by these acts on the part of France and England ; and, in despair of bringing either of the powers back to a more reasonable and civilised species of hostility, they had recourse to measures calculated to withdraw from any intercourse with either. A general embargo was first laid on all British shipping within their harbours, which was soon after succeeded by a Non-intercourse Act, which prohibited all intercourse between the United States and

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94.

Debates on
the repeal
of the Orders
in Council.¹ *Ante*, ch. l.
§ 11.

95.

Their effect
on America
and other
neutral
powers.
Jan. 17,
1809.
Feb. 6,
1809.

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¹ *Infra*, ch.
xci. § 9.² *Ante*, ch.
lxiv. § 60.³ Ann. Reg.
1810, 253,
260; and
1812, 91, 92.
Bign. ix.
309, 319.96.
Arguments
against the
Orders in
Council
by Mr
Brougham,
&c.

either France or England. The particulars of these acts, and the abortive diplomatic efforts which were made to re-establish a good understanding between the two nations, will be given in the sequel of this work.¹ Suffice it to say, that the Non-intercourse Act continued in force through the whole of 1810 and 1811, and that the cessation of all exports to the United States, which at that time took off British produce and manufactures to the extent of no less than thirteen millions sterling, powerfully contributed both to the extraordinary falling off in the exports of the latter of these years, and to the general discontent and suffering in the manufacturing districts, which have been already noticed.² Committees were appointed to take evidence on the subject early in 1812 in both houses of parliament; and their members, among whom Mr Brougham, Mr Baring, and Mr Huskisson took the lead, exerted themselves with extraordinary vigour in prosecuting the inquiry. A great number of petitions against the Orders in Council, chiefly from the large manufacturing towns interested in the trade with America, were presented. Early in June the subject came on for discussion in the House of Commons; and the debates which followed were of the utmost importance, as illustrating the real effect, on the national interests, of the extraordinary species of warfare in which the empire was now engaged.³

On the part of the Opposition, it was argued with uncommon ability by Mr Brougham, Mr Baring, and Mr Ponsonby:—"The question at issue, though one of unexampled importance, is of very little intricacy; the evidence is of immense extent and apparently interminable details; but a few minutes' debate must be sufficient to demonstrate where the only safe or honourable path is to be found. The table of the house has groaned under the mass of petitions presented—the hearts of the members have been harrowed by the details of general suffering which have been established in evidence. Numerous

disorders in different parts of the country have arisen out of this general distress ; it has even driven large bodies of men to the absurd expedient of endeavouring to revive an obsolete law of Elizabeth, for magistrates fixing the rate of wages ; while the more enlightened sufferers under the restrictions of the times, have sought some relief in what would prove a most inadequate remedy, the extension of a free trade to India and China. The Potteries have demanded permission to send their porcelain to China ; and the ancient and respectable city of Newcastle has earnestly entreated that it may be allowed to ship *coal* for the stoves and hothouses of Calcutta ! These various projects, some to a certain extent feasible, others utterly visionary and absurd, only prove the magnitude of the evil which is so generally felt, and remind us of the awful accounts of the plague, when, in the vain effort to seek relief, miserable men were seen wildly rushing into the streets, and madly grasping the first passenger they met, to implore his help.

“ The dreadful amount of the present distress is proved by all the witnesses ; it comes upon us in a thousand shapes ; it exhibits the same never-ending yet ever-varying scene of heart-rending suffering. The wants of the poor have been proved to be so pressing, that they have been forced to part with their whole little stock of furniture ; pawn their blankets, their beds, their very clothes off their backs ; and the prodigious mass of moveable articles thus brought at once into the market, has produced a decided depressing effect upon prices even in the metropolis. Great as was the general distress during the scarcity of 1800 and 1801, it is described by a host of witnesses to have been as nothing compared to that which now prevails ; for then there was a want only of provisions, but wages were high and employment abundant ; whereas now the want of money meets and aggravates the want of food. The returns of exports and imports during the last two years completely account for this

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97.
Distress
which has
been occasioned
by them.

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extraordinary woe. Nay, they exhibit a decay in national industry, which might have been expected to produce a still more heart-rending and wide-spread suffering. Taking the whole amount of trade, both exports and imports (which is the only fair way of reckoning,) there is a falling off, compared with 1809, of thirty-six millions, with 1810 of thirty-eight. In British manufactures alone, the decline from 1809 to 1811 is sixteen millions—including colonial produce, it is no less than twenty-four millions as compared with 1809, and twenty-seven as compared with 1810. The reduction is unparalleled in British annals; it outstrips all the efforts of financiers or treasury-clerks to conceal, and stands forth an imperishable monument of the infatuation on the part of the government which has brought such calamities on the nation.

98.
General
depression
of trade,
both home
and foreign.

“It is in vain to talk of substitutes for the North American trade, the loss of which has been the main cause of these grievous evils. The Brazil market, the South American market, have been tried, and both have terminated in nothing but disappointment. We neither know their wants nor do they require our manufactures. The smuggling trade to the United States through Canada at first afforded some relief; but, since the continuance of our prohibitory system has exasperated the North American population, even this resource has failed us. As a necessary consequence of this total stoppage of all our best foreign markets, the home trade has become depressed in a most remarkable degree. Goods of all sorts, destined for the consumption of foreign states, have been thrown back upon the home market from inability to find any extraneous vent for our manufactures; and then the diminution in the amount of our exports, great as it is, affords an inadequate representation of the real depression of our industry; for it frequently has happened that goods, which had paid duty as exports, and even crossed the Atlantic, have been thrown back upon our own market, and sold at a ruinous loss to all concerned,

for domestic consumption. It is to no purpose, therefore, that, in this unexampled depression of our foreign sales, we turn to our home market for relief; for there the magnitude of our external losses has produced a ruinous glut; and every effort made to find a vent among our own inhabitants but adds to the general distress.

“Let it be shown, indeed, that the national honour or security is involved in upholding the Orders in Council, and all these arguments go for nothing; nay, it becomes the first duty of every patriot, at any hazard, even that of the total ruin of our manufactures, to concur in their maintenance. But has this been shown to be the case? Nay, is it not evident that their repeal is called for alike by what is due to the national character, and the preservation and stability of our naval power? It is unnecessary, in discussing this question, to go back to the legality or illegality, the justice or injustice, of the paper blockades of long lines of the enemy’s coast, to which Napoleon constantly refers the origin of this calamitous species of warfare. Admitting that it may be both just and legal to do so, the question is, Is it *expedient* to assert and enforce such rights at a time when it involves us in such calamities? History proves that, on many occasions, these rights, though never abandoned, have been quietly passed over *sub silentio*, where the assertion of them would have interfered with national interests, or impeded national advantages. This was done at the peace of Utrecht, in the American war, and by express acts of the government in 1793 and 1794. The point now is, whether this is an occasion when, without surrendering our maritime rights, it is expedient for a time to waive their consideration? Now, what is the commerce which we sacrifice for the vain honour of preserving these rights? Why, it is no less than the vast North American market—a market now taking off thirteen millions’ worth of our produce, and worth, in the estimation of the most competent witnesses, all foreign markets put together. The returns

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99.
The inexperience of the continuance of the Orders.

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100.
Origin and
value of the
American
trade lost by
the reten-
tion of the
Orders.

in that market are as sure, the bad debts as few, as in the former trade with Holland.

“ The extent, steadiness, and rapid increase of the trade between England and North America is easily accounted for. The inhabitants of the United States are connected with us by origin, language, and habits ; their tastes go along with their inclinations, and they come to us, as a matter of course, for such manufactured articles as they require. There is not a cabin or loghouse in their vast territory in which you do not meet with British produce ; while the rapid increase of their population, which doubles every thirty years, and in which, nevertheless, there is not a single pauper to be found, offers a boundless field for future increase. It is not a figure of speech, but the simple truth, to assert that, circumstanced as the two countries are, there is not an axe falls in the woods of America which does not put in motion some shuttle, or hammer, or wheel in England. It is the miserable, shuffling, doubtful traffic to the north of Europe and the Mediterranean that we prefer to the sure, regular, and increasing North American trade—a trade placed beyond the reach of the enemy’s power, and which supports at once all that remains of the liberty of the seas, and gives life and vigour to its main pillar within the realm—the manufactures and commerce of England. Look to the other side of the picture. If you continue the cessation of intercourse with America much longer, the inevitable consequence will be, that the Americans will be driven to the necessity of supplying themselves with manufactures. They have the means of doing so within their own bounds : coal and water-carriage in abundance are to be found in their territory ; and the vast fortunes already accumulated in their seaport towns, prove that they are noways deficient in the true commercial spirit. We can have no jealousy of America, whose armies are yet at the plough, or making, since your policy has so willed it, awkward though improving attempts at the

loom ; whose assembled navies could not lay siege to an English man-of-war. The nation is already deeply embarked in the Spanish war ; let us not, then, run the risk of adding another to the already formidable league of our enemies, and reduce ourselves to the necessity of feeding Canada with troops from Portugal, and Portugal with bread from England.”¹*

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¹ Parl. Deb.
xxiii. 486,
522.

Such was the weight of these arguments, and such the strong foundations which they had in the necessities of the times, and the evidence laid before both houses of parliament, that government offered very little resistance to them. It was merely urged by Lord Castlereagh and Mr Rose :—“ No question more vital, both to the national security and the commercial interests of the country, ever came before parliament : and there can be no doubt that a case of grave distress to the manufacturing interest has been made out by the evidence. Nay, there is reason to believe that, if the North American market is not speedily opened, that suffering will be augmented. Even admitting, however, that the repeal of the Orders in Council would occasion the abrogation of the Non-intercourse Act, still it does by no means follow that the original imposition of these Orders was not called for by necessity, and justified by expedience. Was it to be expected that Great Britain was tamely to have submitted to the iniquitous decrees of France without any retaliation ?—without attempting, at least, to inflict upon that state some part of the suffering which it has brought upon this country ? As against France, that system has perfectly succeeded ; and severely as our commerce has suffered in the struggle, hers has undergone a still more remarkable diminution. From the official accounts published by the French government, it appears that, even with their population of nearly forty millions, the total

101.
Argument
on the other
side by the
Ministers.

* The argument of Lord Brougham, of which the preceding sketch is but the skeleton, is one of the ablest, and, withal, soundest pieces of oratorical reasoning in the English language.

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amount of their manufactures for the home market and exportation was only, in 1810, £54,000,000 sterling; while that of Great Britain and Ireland, with only seventeen millions of souls, was 66,000,000. With the exception of the year 1811, which was one of great depression, arising from temporary causes, the preceding years, when the Orders in Council were in operation, were periods of extraordinary and unprecedented prosperity. The average of our exports to continental Europe, for three years previous to the issuing of the Orders in Council, was £17,500,000; that for the three years subsequent, £23,000,000. Can more decisive proof be desired that the machinations of the French Emperor for our destruction have not only failed in their object, but recoiled upon himself?

102.
Unreason-
ableness of
the hostility
of America.

“The hostile feelings of the American government have now made the Orders in Council a pretext for breaking off all commercial intercourse with this country; and doubtless that interruption is one great cause of the distress in which the mercantile interests are now involved. But such an interruption could not have been calculated upon; and, in the ordinary course of human events, it would not have occurred. Reason and equitable feeling should have taught the Americans that the Orders in Council were adopted by the English government as a measure of retaliation only; that they were issued subsequent to the Berlin decree, under the pressure of necessity; and if these defensive measures proved, as doubtless they did, injurious in a very high degree to the interests of American commerce, their enmity should have been directed against France, the primary cause of this destructive system of hostility, instead of this country, which merely in its own defence was driven to its adoption. Never was there a country which, when forced to embrace such a system, evinced a more sincere desire to prosecute it in the way least injurious to neutral powers; an instance of which is to be found in the Order of 1809, limiting

the blockade to France and the powers under her immediate control. The license system, when properly understood, was no departure from the principles of the Orders in Council ; not a fifth of the licenses issued were intended to evade these Orders ; four-fifths originated in the enemy's own necessity for relief from the stringent effects of our measures. We did, however, offer to forego all the advantages of the license trade, and revert to the strict measure of 1807, if the government of the United States would repeal the Non-intercourse Act ; but they have hitherto shown no disposition to embrace such a proposition.

“ The Prince Regent long ago issued a declaration, bearing that, as soon as the Berlin and Milan decrees were repealed, the British government would forthwith withdraw the Orders in Council ; and the French cabinet has recently communicated to the American government a resolution apparently consenting to abandon the decrees, if the British Orders were at the same time repealed. That declaration, however, is not sufficiently explicit to enable the English cabinet to act upon the assurance it contains ; in particular, it appears to be virtually abrogated by the sweeping declaration of the Duke of Bassano, that the Berlin and Milan decrees should remain in full force till the maritime assumptions of this country were abandoned. But the British government is fully disposed to receive the olive branch tendered, whether in good or doubtful faith, by the French ruler ; she is willing for a time to suspend the Orders in Council, if the American government will repeal the Non-intercourse Act. The sincerity of France will thereby be put to the test ; and a breathing-time gained in the midst of this mortal hostility, during which an opportunity would be afforded for a return to a more civilised species of warfare. If the experiment fails, and France persists in her frantic devices, we must return to our retaliatory system ;¹ but if driven to do so, we shall at least have shown every dis-

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103.
Pacific dis-
positions of
the British
govern-
ment.

¹ Parl. Deb.
xxiii. 522,
536.

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position to concede all the just demands of the neutral powers; and such a return would, it is to be hoped, not lead to any interruption of the amicable intercourse between this country and its Transatlantic offspring, which it is the curse of both countries should ever have been broken."

104.
Result of
these pro-
ceedings in
parliament.

No division ensued upon this debate—Mr Brougham contenting himself with congratulating the country upon the prospect of speedily getting rid of these obnoxious Orders, and the ministry upon the manly course they had adopted regarding them. In truth, it was evident, after the declarations of both the English and French governments, that no real object of contention remained between them; or at least that both might, in perfect consistency with their national honour and recorded declarations on the subject, recede from the virulent system of hostility which they had adopted. A fortnight after there appeared in the Gazette an Order absolutely and unequivocally revoking the Orders in Council; but with a declaration that, if the Americans did not, after due notice, revoke their interdictory acts against British commerce, the revocation should become null, and the original Orders revive. This just and manly concession, however, came too late; the democratic party in America had gained entire possession of the public mind; a contest with England, at all hazards, was resolved on; and, before intelligence of the conciliatory act of the British government had crossed the Atlantic, war was actually declared.¹

June 23.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1812, 93,
94.

105.
Reflections
on this
subject.

It is evident, on a dispassionate review of this great debate, and the mighty interests which were wound up with it, that the repeal of the Orders in Council, at the period it took place, was a wise, and indeed necessary measure, and that the greater part of Mr Brougham's arguments were well founded. The observation of Mr Canning, in the course of the discussion, was perfectly just, that the Orders in Council were a political, not a commercial measure; and the moment that the evil

induced by their continuance exceeded the benefit to be expected from it, the hour for their repeal had arrived. That this period had arrived in 1812, was decisively proved by the great falling off in the commerce of the preceding year. Hopes, indeed, might reasonably have been entertained that the neutral states, seeing how evidently Great Britain stood upon the defensive in the maritime quarrel, would have stood aloof from engaging in it ; especially when it was recollected how much more closely their interests were wound up with the maintenance of pacific relations with this country than with any of the Continental powers. America, in particular, which traded with Great Britain to the extent of £13,000,000 a-year, and with France not to the extent of £1,000,000 annually, had the most vital interest to preserve pacific relations with the nation with whom so great a portion of its commercial intercourse was conducted. The whole arguments, so forcibly urged by Mr Brougham, as to the vast importance of the American trade to the English manufacturers, applied still more strongly to the impolicy of the United States coming to a rupture with this country, as the proportion which the English trade bore to the sum-total of their commerce was much greater than the American bore to the aggregate of ours. But still, when the experiment had been made, and it had been proved by the result that the United States were willing to undergo the loss of such a traffic rather than submit to the English Orders in Council, it became to the last degree impolitic to continue them any longer ; for America had infinitely greater resources whereon to subsist during such a suspension of intercourse than the British empire ; and in the struggle which could starve longest, the manufacturing state, the workshop of the world, like a besieged town, was sure to suffer more than the nations which had drawn their lines of circumvallation around it.

History, in the general case, has to deal only with the

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106.
Early life
of Lord
Brougham.

dead ; and it is seldom either just or delicate to mingle with the historical gallery of departed greatness the portraits of living genius. There are some instances, however, in which this obvious rule must be infringed upon ; where the impress communicated to the events of an age by one individual has been so powerful, that his character has become historical property even before his active agency has ceased on the theatre of human affairs. Such a character, in a military and political view, is the Duke of Wellington ; and such, in a moral and social one, is Lord Brougham. This very remarkable man is descended from an old and respectable family in Westmoreland, from whom he inherited the ancient castellated mansion from which he afterwards took his title ; and he received the rudiments of his education at the High School of Edinburgh, where his father had for some years resided. Thence, at an early age, he went to the far-famed university of that city, over which the names of Stewart and Playfair at that period threw an unusual splendour, and where a band of gifted spirits was then arising, many of whom have since shone forth with extraordinary lustre on the great stage of the world. Lord Jeffrey, the most celebrated critic of the age in which he lived ; Sir Walter Scott, the greatest of human novelists ; Lord Lansdowne, the not unworthy successor of Pitt in the direction of the British finances ; Mr Horner, whose early and lamented death alone prevented him from rising to the highest place in the councils of his country ; Lord Brougham, who, for good or for evil, has made the schoolmaster's rod often superior to the marshal's baton—formed some of the members of a society, in which other men, not less distinguished for energy and talents, were then prominent, whose powers are, it is to be feared, destined to be buried in that common charnel-house of genius—the bar and bench of the country.*

* To those who have the felicity of enjoying the acquaintance, or still more the friendship of Lord Corehouse, Lord Moncrieff, Lord Mackenzie, or Lord

He was called to the bar at Edinburgh in 1801, and soon attracted notice by the energy of his character, and the fearlessness and occasional sarcasm of his demeanour; but that capital was too limited a theatre for his growing powers. An able and original work, which he published in 1802, on the colonial policy of Great Britain, early attracted the notice of Mr Pitt; a series of powerful and original papers in the *Edinburgh Review*, gave token of the vast influence which he was destined to exercise on public thought; and his removal to Westminster Hall, a few years afterwards, placed him in a situation where legal celebrity was not inconsistent with senatorial advancement.

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He first obtained entrance into parliament, like all the great men of his day, for a close borough, then in the gift of Lord Carlisle; but his manner was unprepossessing, his voice harsh, and he was at first far from coming up to the high anticipations formed by his friends, and subsequently realised, of his future career. The unconquerable perseverance of his disposition, however, overcame all obstacles, and ultimately obtained for him, if not the avowed, at least the real lead on the Whig side in the House of Commons. His practice at the bar, though considerable, and brilliant from the political character of the cases in which he was chiefly engaged, was not first-rate; and both in legal knowledge and forensic judgment he was never deemed equal to his redoubted antagonist on the northern circuit, Sir James Scarlett, afterwards Lord Abinger. But in energy of character, invincible perseverance, versatility of talent, force of expression, and sarcastic power, he was far beyond any barrister or statesman of his day. If his judgment had been equal to his ability, or his discretion to his information, and his

107.
His character as a statesman.

Cockburn, it is needless to say that nothing but a wider theatre of action, closer proximity to the legislature, or greater leisure for literary pursuits, were necessary to have raised them to the same general eminence which the philosophers, statesmen, and historians of their country, in the last and present age, have attained.

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vast capacity for exertion had always been directed to objects consistent with each other, and of permanent utility rather than passing interest, he would have left a name in history, as he unquestionably has exercised an influence on his own age, second to none in the modern annals of Great Britain.

108.
His failings
and errors.

But inconsistency and want of foresight have always been the bane of his public character. He has signally promoted some great causes, as that of legal reform ; but it is hard to say, upon reviewing the opinions which he has advocated at different periods of his life, whether he has most injured or benefited others which he had still more at heart. He was the steady advocate of Negro freedom, general education, universal toleration, and social amelioration ; yet there is hardly a measure in the end destructive to these great interests, of which he has not, at some period of his career, been the ardent supporter. He has been through life the most resolute enemy of the slave trade, and deserves the lasting thanks of every friend to humanity for his noble efforts to root out that execrable traffic ; but he not less strenuously advocated the abolition of slavery in the British West India Islands in 1834 ; and by so doing he has, on his own admission, doubled the slave trade in extent, and quadrupled it in atrocity throughout the globe.* He besought the House of Peers on his bended knees to pass the Reform Bill, though the opponents of that measure drew their strongest arguments from his own earlier writings on the subject ; and his whole efforts for the last five years have been directed to demonstrate the unhappy effects of the kind of government which that great change

* "The number of slaves landed in Cuba and Brazil alone," said Mr Buxton, the able and humane advocate of the Negro race, "is now 150,000, being more than double the whole draught on Africa when the slave trade controversy began. Twice as many human beings are now its victims as when Wilberforce and Clarkson began their noble task ; and each individual of this increased number, in addition to the horrors formerly endured, is cribbed up in a smaller space, and stowed in a vessel where accommodation is sacrificed to spoil."—*African Slave Trade*, by T. F. BUXTON, London, 1839, p. 172.

necessarily brought upon the country. He was the warm and consistent supporter of Catholic emancipation ; but his exertions have of late been equally vigorous and effective, in demonstrating the bad consequences which its concession has, hitherto at least, had upon social amelioration in the one island, and the general system of government in the other. He has always been the sincere and powerful supporter of popular instruction ; but by directing it chiefly to intellectual acquisitions, he turned that mighty lever to visionary objects, and placed it beyond the reach or without the interest of the great body of the people ; while, by severing it from religious instruction, he deprived it of the chief blessings which it is fitted to confer upon mankind. He is possessed of extraordinary intensity of vision for present objects and immediate interests ; but he is far from being equally clear-sighted as to ultimate consequences, or the permanent welfare of humanity.

His style of speaking presents the most extraordinary contrast to the abstract ideas which he entertains, and has powerfully expressed, as to the perfection of eloquence. No man feels more strongly the masculine simplicity of ancient oratory, or has better described the injurious effect sometimes even of a single epithet on the majesty of thought ; while none more constantly weakens the force of his own intense and vivid conceptions by variety and redundancy of expression. He objected to the addition which the imagination of Tasso made to the sublime image of Dante ;* and yet he seldom fails to overwhelm

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109.
His character as an orator.

* "Al guisà di Leon quando si posa."

To which Tasso added the line,

"Girando gli occhi, et non movendo il passo."

Critics may differ as to whether the beautiful image in the last line does or does not detract from the majestic simplicity of the first ; but Lord Brougham unequivocally condemns it as destroying the grandeur of the Florentine bard. See Lord Brougham's Address to the Students of Glasgow. *Lord Rector's Addresses*, Glasgow, 1830—a most interesting collection, as well from the celebrity of the statesmen and philosophers called to that eminent station, as from the progressive change in the character of thought which their successive compositions evince, from the philosophic silence on religion, characteristic of the

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the reader by exaggerations of the same idea under different forms, till the original impression is wellnigh obliterated. No one more happily or forcibly strikes the iron upon the head in the outset ; but none, by a repetition of slant blows, more frequently mars its force, or alters its direction. His long practice of addressing juries, or assemblies of ordinary capacity, has proved injurious to his efforts to reach the highest style of eloquence. Every idea, if at all felicitous, is, in his hand, torn to rags. He forgets that those who read his speeches will not be equally obtuse with those who heard them—"que les gens habiles s'entendent à demi-mot." On this account, his fame with posterity—that is, the reading and thinking few—will be by no means equal to that which he has enjoyed among his contemporaries—that is, the hearing and unthinking many.

110.
Merits of
his style of
speaking.

Irony and sarcasm constitute his strongest arm in oratorical contests ; and there he is unrivalled even by Pitt or Canning. His speeches to juries were often models of vehement and powerful declamation ; but his judgment as a counsel was far from being equal to his talent as a barrister, and in more than one instance he has supplied what was wanting on the side of the prosecution by his imprudence in calling witnesses for the defence.* His information is immense, and his powers of application unbounded, but his knowledge on subjects of philosophy is rather extensive than accurate—of law, rather varied than profound. He has always been distinguished by the warmest filial and domestic attachments ;

days of Hume, with which it commences, to the devotional glow descriptive of those of Chalmers, with which it concludes, and which only wants the admirable address of Sir James Graham in 1838, to be one of the most instructive monuments which the literature of Europe during and after the French Revolution has produced, of the vast effect of that great event in bringing men back, by necessity and suffering, to the best and noblest sentiments of their nature.

* It is well known that the character of the chief witnesses for the prosecution, in the case of Queen Caroline, was so bad that no reliance could be placed on their testimony, and on this fact Lord Brougham has never failed to discant in the most unmeasured terms, whenever he could by possibility introduce the subject. He has not so frequently told, however, what is equally well known,

and a purer ray of glory than even that which is reflected from his senatorial achievements is to be found in the steadiness with which, though often erring in judgment, he has ever supported the interests of freedom and humanity; and the indefatigable ardour which has enabled him, amidst a multiplicity of professional and official duties which would have overwhelmed any other man, to devote his great powers to the illustration of the wisdom of God from the works of nature.

His merits and defects as a writer are of a totally different kind from those which characterise him as a statesman and an orator, but share in the strange contradictions and anomalies of his mind. The work on which his reputation in future times will chiefly rest is his "Lives of Statesmen and Men of Letters during the Reign of George III.;" and it is certainly a very amusing, and, in some respects, an able production. Yet are its merits and demerits such as would never have been expected from the vehement parliamentary orator or acute legal pleader. Apart from some flagrant instances of party prejudice in the political Lives, the work is distinguished, especially in the literary part, by great candour, considerable judgment, and an amiable spirit of justice and equanimity. He has collected a great many amusing anecdotes, and brought within a comparatively narrow compass much political and literary gossip. On the other hand, there is little eloquence in the work, few marks of original thought or genius, and hardly any of that enthusiasm for the great and the good which it is

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111.
His merits
as a writer.

that it was the evidence of the witnesses whom he himself put into the box, Lieutenants Flyn and Hownam, whose character was above suspicion, that in the end left no doubt of the Queen's guilt in the mind of any person capable of weighing evidence.—See *Parliamentary Debates*, 1820, iii. 459-543, *New Series*. Yet this unhappy princess was possessed of some amiable, and many charming qualities, and in better hands might, in Mr Canning's words, have been "the life, and grace, and ornament of society." "She is," says a personal and disinterested acquaintance, Sir Walter Scott, "a charming princess, and lives in an enchanted palace; and I cannot help thinking her prince must labour under some malignant spell to deny himself her society."—See LOCKHART'S *Life of Scott*, p. 99.

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the chief object of biography to awaken, and which the lives he was narrating were so well fitted to call forth. He never seems to think for himself, but adopts the prevailing opinions of his party in politics or economics for the day, as axioms concerning which no doubt whatever can be entertained. Thus he gravely asserts that the *discovery* that “rent arises from the bringing of inferior lands into cultivation, is perhaps the most considerable step made in political economy since the ‘Wealth of Nations’ was published;”^{*} forgetting that, if that be true, no rent could ever have existed anywhere if the world had been, like the plain of Lombardy, a vast plain of equal fertility in every part—even although, as in the Delta of Egypt, the riches of the soil yielded a return seventy-fold to the labours of the cultivator. He is desirous of obtaining the fame of universal knowledge, and inserts in popular biographies algebraic calculations from d’Alembert: but it would be well to recollect that such reputation is now impossible, and that he who aims at compassing everything has in general mastered nothing.

112.
Argument
of the Op-
position
against the
Spanish
war.

The prosecution of the war in the Peninsula, and the chances of continuing it with success, was the last of the momentous subjects which occupied the British parliament during the sessions of 1810 and 1811; and none affords more interesting matter for retrospect. On the part of the Opposition, it was strenuously argued by Mr Ponsonby, Earl Grey, and Lord Grenville:—“It is a painful task to refer to predictions formerly made and despised, now unfortunately realised. How disagreeable soever, nevertheless, it may be, from a reference to past disasters, to anticipate future calamities, it has now become a bounden duty to do so; and this the more, that it is not a mere barren censure of past errors to which such a retrospect leads, but a solemn injunction to rescue the country in future from similar calamities. Is

^{*} *Lives of Statesmen*, vol. iii. p. 142.

parliament to sit year after year passive spectators of wasteful expenditure, and the useless effusion of the best blood of the country, in hopeless, calamitous, and disgraceful efforts? What return is due to the gallant army which has made such noble sacrifices? Is it not a sacred duty imposed upon government to see that not one drop more of blood is wasted in a cause where no thinking man can say, that by any possibility such dreadful sacrifices are made with any prospect of advantage to the country? Is it agreeable or consistent with the character of men of common intelligence to submit to be fed from day to day with the tale of unprofitable successes—of imaginary advantages to be gained by our army for ourselves or our allies? Is there any one who in his conscience believes that even the sacrifice of the whole British army would secure the defence of Portugal? If such a man there be, it may with confidence be affirmed, not only that he is unfit to be intrusted with the government of the country, but even that he is incapable of transacting public business in any deliberative assembly.

“In a financial point of view, the cause of the Peninsula is utterly hopeless. Can any man who looks at our immense exertions for the last seventeen years, assert that the annual expenditure of from three to four millions in its defence, has not been absolutely lost to Spain, fruitless to Portugal, and of no advantage whatever to this country? In fact, so utterly hopeless is the cause, that nothing short of a divine miracle can render it effectual for its proposed object. But there are higher considerations than those of mere finance, which call upon us instantly to abandon this sanguinary and unprofitable struggle. The utter impossibility of defending Portugal with the British army, aided by the Portuguese levies, is so apparent, that it is a mockery of common understanding to argue on the subject. In former instances, when Portugal was attacked, the forces of the enemy were divided; but now they are wholly unoccupied in the north, and may be directed with

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113.
The alleged
impossibility of continuing its
expenditure.

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fatal and unerring effect against that country. Is there any man bold enough to assert that the British army in Portugal, aided by the native force maintained by our subsidies, will be sufficient to resist such an attack? What reliance can be placed on this subsidiary force, unpractised in the operations of war, and wholly ignorant of military discipline, except what they may pick up from their British officers? That Portugal can be defended by such a force, is a thing absolutely impossible: if our troops do not take refuge in their ships, before six months is over not a British soldier will remain in the Peninsula except as a prisoner of war.

114.
Degraded
condition of
the Portu-
guese.

“Has anything been done to rescue the Portuguese people from the miserable state of thralldom in which they have been kept by their government, nobles, and priests, and to develop that ardent popular spirit from which alone history teaches us a vigorous national resistance is to be expected? Here has been a glorious opportunity for raising the Portuguese nation from that wretchedness and degraded condition to which centuries of mental ignorance and civil oppression have reduced them. Here was a task worthy of the greatest statesmen, suited to a wise and liberal policy—to an enlarged and generous spirit—to the free institutions of a free government. Nothing has been done with this view; the Portuguese are in as degraded a state as when the French eagles first approached the towers of Lisbon. Was it possible to expect a national spirit to arise when nothing was done to elicit it? And without such a spirit among the people, was it not, if possible, more hopeless than from other views to expect that any successful resistance could be made? The Portuguese levies, upon whom so much reliance is placed, might in time, perhaps, hereafter become good soldiers, and be capable of acting with regular troops. But when the corruption, weakness, and imbecility of the government are taken into view, every one must be convinced of the total impossibility of obtaining any native

force capable of active co-operation with the British army.

“What assistance have we ever obtained from the Spanish armies, notwithstanding the high-sounding promises with which they have deluded the English troops into their territories? To expect anything better from the Portuguese, is to put all experience at defiance. They may be useful as light troops, but cannot act with regular soldiers. Portugal, instead of being defensible from its mountains, is perhaps the most indefensible country in Europe. The experience, not merely of the last seventeen years, but of the last few months, have amply demonstrated the total inefficacy of mountain ranges as a barrier against the vast forces and bold tactics of modern war. What defence has the Sierra Morena proved against the invasion of Soult? It is not by any such defences that Portugal is to be saved from the fate which has overtaken all the military monarchies of Europe. Disguise it as you will, the real question at issue is, whether the army at this moment in Portugal is to be sacrificed, as those under Sir John Moore and Lord Chatham have been; and unless the house intervenes, from a just sense of its own duty, not less than of regard to the national honour, disasters yet greater than either of these, and probably irreparable, await the British empire.

“Our victories are perpetually held up as monuments of our eternal glory, and Maida, Corunna, Vimeira, and Talavera are everlastingly referred to as the theme of undying congratulation. But what have any of these boasted triumphs done for the people of the country where they were won, or for the general issue of the war? Maida handed over the Neapolitans to the tender mercies of an irritated and cruel enemy; Corunna sacrificed Moore, only to deliver over Galicia to the Gallic armies; Vimeira was immediately followed by the disgraceful convention of Cintra; and Talavera was at best but an exhibition of rash confidence and victorious temerity.

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115.

Worthlessness of the native troops, Spanish and Portuguese alike.

116.

Alleged fruitlessness of all the victories won.

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¹ Parl. Deb.
xv. 511, 535,
87, 90.

117.
Answer by
Lords Wel-
lesley and
Liverpool.

Honours have been conferred upon Sir Arthur Wellesley, for whom and for his country it would have been much more honourable if he had never changed his name. His conduct in Spain seemed the result of infatuation. After defeating Soult, he recrossed the Douro to form a junction with Cuesta, and when that was effected he remained unaccountably inactive, till Soult was so far recovered as to be able to paralyse all his efforts, by descending into his rear after the battle of Talavera ; and when forced to retreat, he retired to an unhealthy province at an unhealthy season, where he remained some months till his army had lost a third of its amount from malaria fever. If these are the consequences of your triumphs, what may be anticipated from your defeats ?”¹

To these arguments it was replied by Lord Wellesley, Lord Liverpool, and Mr Perceval :—“ The arrangements now proposed proceed on the same principles with the whole efforts hitherto made and sanctioned by large majorities in both houses of parliament. What has occurred to induce us to swerve from this course, or depart from those principles which have invariably influenced our alliance with the Peninsular kingdoms to the present hour ? The royal message proposes to take thirty thousand Portuguese into British pay. Was not such a course strenuously recommended by Mr Fox and Mr Windham, when Portugal was endangered, when they were in power in 1806 ? Why are we to be now called upon to depart from this policy, adopted by the greatest statesmen of all parties—and to abandon Portugal to her fate at the very time when she is making the greatest efforts to avert subjugation ? What advantage is to be gained from thus casting over our counsels the hue of despair ? Are we to tell our allies that the hour of their fate has arrived ; that all attempts to assist them are in vain, and that they must bow the neck and submit to the yoke of a merciless invader ? That would indeed be to strew the conqueror’s path with flowers ; to prepare the way for his triumphal

march to the throne of the two kingdoms. Is it for this that so much treasure has been expended, so much blood has been shed? The spirit of the Spanish people is still excellent, their resources are far from exhausted; those of Portugal are untouched; our gallant army has never yet sustained a defeat; and is this the time to retire with disgrace from the contest? Will he who never risks a defeat ever gain a victory?

“Let us not, therefore, come to any resolution which can countenance Portugal in relaxing her exertions, or justify Spain in considering her condition hopeless. And yet what other result could be anticipated if we were now to withdraw from the Peninsula before Portugal is so much as invaded, or the shock of war has even come upon us? The circumstances under which the war has commenced in the Peninsula, form a glorious contrast to those that pervade all the other nations of the Continent. Spain was the first country that exhibited the example of a general rising of its population, against the invasion and usurpation of the French ruler. In other countries he has been opposed by the armies alone, and when they were overwhelmed the states were conquered. But in Spain the resistance has proceeded from the whole people; and the hopes founded on their efforts are not to be dashed to the ground by the disasters of two or three campaigns. The country presents, beyond any other, physical advantages for such a stubborn system of warfare, from the vast desert of rocky tracts and numerous mountain ridges with which it abounds; while the history and character of the people afford room for well-grounded hopes, that they will not in such a contest belie the character which they acquired in the Moorish wars. No point can be imagined so favourable for the *place-d’armes* of the British force as the Tagus, lying as it does on the flank of the enemy’s communications, and in such a position as to afford a central point, equally adapted for secure defence or for offensive operations.

118.
Remarkable
features of
the Penin-
sular con-
test.

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119.

Gains al-
ready ac-
complished
in it.

“If the hope of defending Portugal is really of that desperate character which is represented, let a motion be brought forward at once to abandon that country to its fate. Will the gentlemen opposite support such a motion, and thereby sacrifice at once all the blood and treasure which have already been expended in the Peninsula? Will they bring invasion home at once to our own doors? Have we gained nothing by the contest in its bloody fields? Is it nothing to have maintained an equal struggle with the conqueror of continental Europe for so long a period, to have staid the tide of conquest heretofore so fearfully rapid, and to be able to say that still, in the third year of the war, our standards wave in undiminished security over the towers of Lisbon? We have gained that which is at once more honourable and more precious than empty laurels, the affection and confidence of the people both in Portugal and Spain: affection so great, that there is not a want of the British soldiers in the former country that is not instantly and gratuitously supplied; confidence so unbounded, that the government of the latter have offered to put their fleet at the disposal of the British admiral. War has its chances and its reverses as well as its glories; we cannot gain the latter if we shun the former: but surely never did nation win a brighter garland than England has done during the Peninsular contest, and never was nation bound by stronger ties to support a people who have, with such heroic resolution, borne during three years the whole weight of Napoleon’s military power.¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
xvi. 508,
535, and 94,
105.

120.
And hero-
ism display-
ed by the
Spaniards.

“It is ungenerous to represent the whole people of the Peninsula as having achieved nothing worthy of memory. Have the defenders of Saragossa and Gerona no title to the admiration of posterity? In what other country have three hundred thousand Frenchmen been constantly engaged in active warfare, for three years, without having yet effected its subjugation? True, the Spaniards have been often defeated; true, their chief provinces have been

overrun ; but after every defeat fresh armies have sprung up, and all history cannot produce an example of a more heroic resistance than this 'degraded' people have opposed to the invader. Nor has our co-operation been in time past unavailing, nor will it prove in time to come fruitless. Sir John Moore's advance arrested the conquest of the south of Spain, and postponed for more than a year the irruption into the Andalusian provinces. Lord Wellington's attack on Soult expelled the French from Portugal, and restored Galicia and Asturias, with the fleet at Ferrol, to the patriot arms ; his advance towards Madrid has drawn all the disposable forces of the enemy into the plains of la Mancha, and at once protected Portugal and given a breathing time to Spain. The British army, headed by Wellington, and supported by forty thousand Portuguese, directed by British officers, is not yet expelled from the Peninsula ; and it will require no ordinary force of the enemy to dislodge such a body from their strongholds near Lisbon."¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
xvi. 536,
and 105.

Upon this debate parliament supported ministers in their resolution to continue the war : in the Lords by a majority of 30—the numbers being 124 to 94 ; and in the Commons by a majority of 96—the numbers being 263 to 167.*

When the Eastern sage was desired by a victorious Sultan to give him an inscription for a ring, which should, in a few words, convey the advice best calculated to moderate the triumph of prosperous, and diminish the depression of adverse fortune, he wrote the line—"*And this, too, shall pass away.*" Perhaps it is impossible to find words more universally descriptive of human affairs ; or of that unceasing change from evil to good, and from good to evil, which, alike in private life and the concerns of nations, appears to be the destiny of all sublunary

121.
Reflections
on this de-
bate, and
the conduct
of the Oppo-
sition.

* In justice to the Opposition, it must be observed, that the greater part of the debates here summed up took place immediately before the Torres Vedras campaign.

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things. It is from inattention to this perpetual revolution, not of fortune, but of moral causes controlling it, that the greatest political calamities, and most of the greatest political errors, in every age have been owing. The Opposition, in the earlier part of Wellington's career, were subject to the full share of this general weakness. They thought that things would continue permanently as they then were ; that Napoleon's greatness was to be as durable as it had been irresistible ; and that the experienced inability of any European power to combat his land forces, had, for the lifetime of the whole existing generation at least, established his empire beyond the possibility of overthrow. Judging from the past experience of that conqueror, there can be no doubt that these views were founded in reason ; and yet the world was on the eve of the campaign of Salamanca and the Moscow retreat.

122.
Cause of
the errors
of the
Whigs on
this point.

The error of the Opposition consisted in their insensibility to the change which was supervening in human affairs, and to the new principles of vigour on the one side, and weakness on the other, which were rising into action, from the effects of the very triumphs and reverses which appeared to have indelibly fixed the destiny of human affairs. The perception of such a change, when going forward, is the highest effort of political wisdom ; it is the power of discerning it which, in every important crisis, distinguishes the great from the second-rate statesman, the heroic from the temporising ruler of mankind. Alone of all his compeers, Wellington saw and acted on this conviction. The government at home, gifted with less penetration, or fewer opportunities of observation, were far from sharing in his confidence as to the result, though they had the magnanimity to persevere in their course, even when they had little hopes of its success. The glorious triumphs to which it led, and the enduring reward which their constancy obtained, adds another to the many instances which history affords, where heroism

of conduct has supplied the want of intellectual acuteness, and where the ancient maxim has been found good, that "true wisdom cometh from the heart."

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The prolonged, obstinate, and most formidable resistance which the Whig party made to the prosecution of the Spanish war, in its earlier stages, was an error of judgment, which only showed that they were not gifted with the highest political quality—that of seeing futurity through the shadows of present events. But when the tide had obviously turned—when success had in a durable way crowned the British arms, and the waves of Gallic ambition had permanently receded from the rocks of Torres Vedras—their conduct was of a more reprehensible cast; it became the fit subject of moral censure. With slow and unwilling steps they receded from their favourite position, as to the impossibility of defending Portugal; they still heaped abuse upon ministers for their conduct in the contest, although it was chiefly blamable, in time past, from having been too much framed on their advice; it was a cold and reluctant assent which they yielded even to the merits of Wellington himself. This insensibility to national glory, when it interfered with party ambition—this jealousy of individual greatness, when it obscured party renown—proved fatal to their hopes of accession to power during the lifetime of the generation which had grown up to manhood during the Revolutionary war. Doubtless it is the highest effort of patriotic virtue to exult at successes which are to confirm an adverse party in power; doubtless no small share of magnanimity is required to concede merit to an opponent who is withering the hopes of individual elevation. But nations, from men acting on the great theatre of the world, have a right to expect such disinterestedness; it is the wisest course in the end even for themselves; and experience has proved that in every age really generous hearts are capable of such conduct. When Wellington lay at Elvas, in May 1811, he

123.

Their long
insensibility
to the glory
of England.

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received a letter from Mr Whitbread, retracting, in the handsomest manner, his former strictures, and ascribing them, probably with justice, to the imperfect information on which his judgment had been founded. The English general expressed himself highly gratified, as well he might, with this generous conduct;* but it does not appear that so noble an example was followed by any other of the Whig leaders; and on this occasion unhappily, as on many others, the exception proves the rule.

124.
Budget, and
naval and
military
forces of
1811.

Having determined to prosecute the war in the Peninsula with undiminished vigour, parliament granted to ministers ample supplies in the year 1811 for its prosecution. No less than £19,540,000 was voted for the navy, and £23,869,000 for the army; besides £4,555,000 for the ordnance, and £2,700,000 for the support of the Portuguese forces. The permanent taxes amounted to £38,232,000, and the war ones yielded above £25,000,000; and the loan was £16,636,000, including £4,500,000 for the service of Ireland. The total Ways and Means raised on account of Great Britain were £80,600,000, and £10,309,000 on account of Ireland—in all £90,909,000. This income, immense as it was, fell short of the expenditure of the United Kingdom, which that year reached £92,194,000. The army numbered 220,000 soldiers in the regular forces, and 81,000 militia, besides 340,000 local militia; and the navy exhibited 107 ships of the line in commission, besides 119 frigates.¹ The total

¹ Finance
Accounts,
Parl. Deb.
xxii. 1, 34,
App. and
Ann. Reg.
1812, 398,
408. App.
to Chron.
James, v.
Table iii.
App. No.
19.

* "I was most highly gratified by your letter of the 29th April, received last night, and I beg to return you my thanks for the mode in which you have taken the trouble to inform me of the favourable change of your opinion respecting affairs in this country. I acknowledge that I was much concerned to find that persons for whom I entertained the highest respect, and whose opinions were likely to have great weight in England and throughout Europe, had delivered opinions, erroneous as I thought, respecting things in this country; and I prized their judgments so highly, that, being certain of the error of the opinion which they delivered, I was induced to ascribe their conduct to the excess of the spirit of party. I am highly gratified by the approbation of yourself and others; and it gives me still more pleasure to be convinced that such men could not be unjust towards an officer in the service of the country abroad."—WELLINGTON to SAMUEL WHITBREAD, Esq., 23d May 1811—GURWOOD, vii. 585.

vessels of war belonging to the United Kingdom were 1019, of which no less than 240 were of the line.*

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The supplies voted for the succeeding year, 1812, were still greater, and kept pace with the increasing magnitude of the contest when the campaign of Salamanca had commenced, and the deliverance of the Peninsula in good earnest was being attempted. The net produce of the permanent taxes in that year was no less than £40,000,000, of the war ones £26,000,000, in all £66,000,000 ; and £29,268,000 was raised by loan, including £4,500,000 for the service of Ireland, and £2,500,000 for that of the East India Company, guaranteed by government. The public expenditure was on a proportionate scale : the sum expended for the navy was £20,500,000, that for the army £25,000,000, besides £4,252,000 for the ordnance ; the loans to Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Sicily, and Russia, amounted to £5,315,000, while the interest of the national debt amounted to £23,124,000 ; and still no less than £13,482,000 was applied to the sinking fund. The navy, during this year, consisted of 978 ships of all sizes, of which 236 were of the line : and 102 line-of-battle ships and 131 frigates were in commission. The army numbered 227,000 regular soldiers under its banners, besides 86,000 regular, and 335,000 local militia. It seemed as if, as the contest continued and the scale on which it was conducted was enlarged, the resources of the empire, so far from declining, widely expanded. †

1810.

125.

Budget, and
naval and
military
forces for
1812.

The second decennial census of the population took place in the close of 1811, and was reported to parliament in January 1812. It exhibited an increase of 1,600,000 upon the former number in 1801—being at the rate of about $13\frac{1}{2}$ per cent annually over the whole empire. So great an augmentation, considering the protracted and bloody hostilities in which the nation had so long been engaged in every quarter of the globe, and

126.

Second
decennial
census of
the people.

* See Appendix, D, Chap. LXIV.

† See Appendix, E, Chap. LXIV.

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LXIV.

1811.

¹ Parl. Deb.
xxi. 478.127.
Negotiation
for an ex-
change of
prisoners,
with
France.

the heavy drain on the male population both for foreign and colonial service, justly excited the surprise and called forth the congratulation of parliament and the nation ; and the important fact was then for the first time elicited, that war, though generally considered as the scourge of the species, often communicates, when carried on according to the maxims of civilised life, an impulse rather than a check to the increase of mankind ; and that the quickened circulation and augmented demand for labour which it occasions, sometimes, especially in the countries removed from hostility at land, more than compensate the destruction of human life by which it is accompanied.^{1*}

Two very important events which occurred at this period, deserve to be mentioned before the domestic transactions of Great Britain in the years 1811 and 1812 are disposed of, and the reader is embarked in the mighty concluding events of the war. The first of these was the rupture of the negotiations which had been for some time pending for the exchange of prisoners of war between England and France : the second, the capture of the *last* colonial settlement of the French Emperor, and the establishment of the British flag in undisputed sovereignty both in the eastern and western hemispheres. Great embarrassment had, for a very long period, been experienced by the English government from the immense accumulation of French prisoners in the British islands, and the difficulty of finding any secure places for the custody of so large a number of able-bodied men. Fortresses, with the exception of Portsmouth and Plymouth, there were none in England ; and the only other regular fortification in the northern part of the island, Fort

	1801.	1811.
* Population of England,	8,331,434	9,499,400
Population of Wales,	541,546	607,380
Population of Scotland,	1,599,068	1,804,864
Army and Navy,	470,598	640,500
Totals,	10,942,646	12,552,144

—*Parliamentary Debates*, xxi. 286.

George, near Inverness in Scotland, had not accommodation for above fifteen hundred men. Now there were, in 1810, not less than fifty thousand French prisoners in Great Britain; and after erecting, at an enormous expense, several vast structures for their habitation, particularly one at Dartmoor in the south of England, and two in Scotland, the latter each capable of containing six or seven thousand men, the government were under the necessity of confining great numbers in the hulks and guard-ships.

The detention of soldiers in such a situation was made the subject of loud and frequent complaint by the French Emperor, who said in the *Moniteur*, that, "by a refinement of cruelty, the English government sent the French soldiers on board the hulks, and the sailors into *prisons in the interior of Scotland*."* With his usual unfeeling disposition, however, to those whose services could no longer be made available, he not only resisted every proposal for an exchange of prisoners on anything approaching to reasonable principles, but never remitted one farthing for their maintenance. He thus left the whole helpless multitude to starve, or be a burden on the British government, which, on the contrary, regularly remitted the whole cost of the support of the English captives in France to the imperial authorities.¹ Notwithstanding Napoleon's neglect, however, the prisoners were surprisingly healthy, there being only 321 in hospital out of

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LXIV.

1811.

128.

Napoleon's
complaints
on this sub-
ject.

¹ Parl. Deb.

xx. 634.

Hard. xi.

105.

* The great depot of French prisoners in Scotland, which Napoleon held out as so deplorable a place of detention, was a noble edifice, erected at a cost of nearly £100,000, in a beautiful and salubrious situation near Perth, on the Tay, which, after being for twenty-five years unoccupied, was in 1839 converted by the government, on account of its numerous advantages, into a great central jail for criminals. It contained 7,000 prisoners; and so healthy was the situation, and so substantial the fare and lodging they had received, that of this great number only from five to six died annually; a smaller mortality than that among any equal body of men in any rank in Europe going about their usual avocations. That in England was equally healthy. At Dartmoor depot in 1812, out of 20,000 prisoners there were only 300 sick, or 1 in 66; a proportion much above the average health of persons at large.—*Personal knowledge.* *Parl. Deb.* xx. 694.

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LXIV.

1811.

129.
Proposals
for their
exchange
by Great
Britain.

45,939 in confinement, while out of 2,710 who enjoyed their liberty on parole, no less than 165 were on the sick-list.

At length, in April 1810, the British ministry sent Mr Mackenzie on a special errand to endeavour to effect an exchange with the French government. He was well received by the imperial cabinet, and the negotiation opened under apparently favourable auspices; but it soon appeared that the demands of Napoleon were so exorbitant as to render all the efforts of the negotiators abortive. He insisted that the transfer should be general; that is, that all the prisoners, French, English, Spaniards, Portuguese, and Italians, should be exchanged, man for man, and rank for rank, on the same footing as the principal power under whose banners they were respectively ranged. The effect of this would have been, that Napoleon would have obtained restitution of fifty thousand French soldiers and sailors in exchange for *ten thousand* English prisoners, being all whom he had in his custody; the balance of forty thousand being made up of a rabble of Spanish and Portuguese levies, who were of little value, and who had no title to be placed in the same rank with the regular soldiers of either of the principal nations. The British government insisted that any given number of British should first be exchanged for an equal number of French; and that then the transfer, man for man, and rank for rank, between the remaining French or their allies against the Spanish and Portuguese should commence.* Neither party would recede from the position which they had respectively taken, and the result was, that the negotiations broke off, and Mr Mackenzie returned to this country in the beginning of November.¹

¹ Bign. ix.
145. Parl.
Deb. xx.
623, 631.

No other testimony than that of Napoleon himself is requisite to demonstrate the unreasonable nature of the pretension on his part, which led to this melancholy result. "Supposing," said he, in speaking of the com-

* See Appendix, F, Chap. LXIV.

parative merit of the troops composing the French and Allied armies previous to the battle of Waterloo, "that one English soldier was to be placed against one French, you would require two Prussian, or Dutch, or soldiers of the Confederation, to counterbalance one Frenchman."¹ Now, if two Prussian or German regular soldiers were required to counterbalance one Englishman or Frenchman, unquestionably four Spanish or Portuguese undisciplined recruits would have been barely sufficient for a similar counterpoise. Nothing, therefore, could have been more unreasonable than the demand on the part of the French government, which ultimately proved fatal to the negotiation. Yet so much was Napoleon blinded by egotistical feelings on this subject, that he made the conduct of the English cabinet in the transaction a bitter subject of complaint to the latest hour of his life; and actually had the address to persuade his troops that their long detention in English prisons was the fault of the British government, when it was entirely his own; and when he had left them to starve there, without the least relief from him. In fact this would have been their fate, but for the humane interposition of the very government which in this transaction he was loading with obloquy.^{2*}

CHAP.
LXIV.

1811.

130.

The failure
of the nego-
tiation was
owing to
Napoleon.
¹ 9th Book
of Nap.
Mem. 61.

² Bign. ix.
145, 146.
Parl. Deb.
xx. 623,
631. Ann.
Reg. 1811,
76. Las
Cases, vii.
39, 40.

The other memorable event of the period, apart from

* Napoleon's account of these transactions was as follows:—"The English had infinitely more French than I had English prisoners. I knew well that the moment they had got back their own they would have discovered some pretext for carrying the exchange no farther, and my poor French would have remained for ever in the hulks. I admitted, therefore, that I had much fewer English than they had French prisoners; but then I had a great number of Spanish and Portuguese, and, by taking them into account, I had a mass of prisoners, in all, considerably greater than theirs. I offered, therefore, to exchange the whole against the whole. This proposition at first disconcerted them, but *at length they agreed to it*. But I had my eye on everything. I saw clearly that if they began by exchanging an Englishman against a Frenchman, as soon as they got back their own they would have brought forward something to stop the exchange. I insisted, therefore, that three thousand Frenchmen should at once be exchanged against one thousand English and two thousand Portuguese and Spaniards. They refused this, and so the negotiation broke off."—LAS CASES, vii. 39, 40.

CHAP.
LXIV.

1811.

131.

Description
and vast im-
portance of
Java.

the never-ending maze of European politics, was the successful expedition undertaken against JAVA in the close of 1811, and the capture of the *last colonial possession* of the French empire. This noble island, in itself a kingdom, is no less than six hundred and forty miles long, and from eighty to a hundred and forty broad, and contains above two millions of inhabitants. Its surface, agreeably diversified by hill and dale, and rising in the interior into lofty mountains, presents situations adapted for almost every variety of vegetable production, whether of the temperate or torrid zones; while its admirable situation in the centre of the Indian Archipelago, midway between India and China, pointed it out as the emporium destined by nature for almost the whole of the lucrative Eastern commerce. So rich is its soil, so varied its capabilities, that it now produces sixty thousand tons of sugar, and five million pounds of pepper, for exportation annually; besides furnishing rice and other grains for the support of its numerous inhabitants, and yielding a lucrative commerce of cinnamon, nutmeg, and other spices, to its European masters. It was early acquired, and had been for centuries in the hands of the Dutch, who, carrying to the East the habits and partialities of their own swampy territory, built their capital, Batavia, in a low unhealthy situation, and intersected it with canals, which rendered it doubly dangerous. Such, however, are the advantages of its situation, and of its noble harbour, esteemed the finest in the Indian Archipelago, that, notwithstanding its pestilential atmosphere, it contains nearly two hundred thousand inhabitants. But the cool breezes on the heights in its vicinity offer many salubrious situations which the eager European thirst for gold has hitherto unaccountably neglected;¹ while the lofty hills and pastoral valleys in the interior present numerous spots for human abode, where the burning rays of the sun are tempered by the fresh-blowing mountain air, and the glowing skies of the East shed their radiance

¹ Malte-
Brun, iii.
445, 453.
Valenty-
n. Java, 64.
Indes
Orient.
v. 65.

over the rich foliage and green slopes of European scenery.

This splendid island was the last possession beyond the seas which remained to the French empire, of which it had become a part upon the incorporation of Holland in 1810. Its reduction had long been an object of ambition to the British government; and in 1802 the preparations for the expedition were so far advanced, that the command was offered to Sir Arthur Wellesley, then governor of Mysore, by whom it was refused, as interfering with the important duties of that responsible situation. The Mahratta war, which soon after broke out, with its immediate consequence, the contest with Holkar, involved the Indian government in such a maze of hostility, and so seriously embarrassed their finances, that it was not till 1811 that the project could be seriously revived. It was then, however, set about in good earnest; and, to give additional *eclat* to the expedition, Lord Minto, the governor-general of India, resolved to accompany it in person. In the close of 1810, the Isle of France had surrendered to a combined naval and military expedition from Bombay, and the enemy was completely rooted out of his possessions in the Indian ocean. Those in the Eastern Archipelago were the next object of attack. The islands of Amboyna and Banda having been reduced by the British arms, a powerful expedition against Java was fitted out at Madras in March, consisting of four British and five native regiments of infantry, with a regiment of horse and a considerable train of artillery; in all, ten thousand five hundred men, under the command of the gallant Sir Samuel Auchmuty. The expedition effected a landing at the village of Chillingching, about twelve miles to the east of Batavia, in the beginning of August. The principal force of the enemy, which consisted of about ten thousand men, was collected in the intrrenched camp of FORT CORNELIUS¹—a position strongly fortified

CHAP.
LXIV.

1811.

132.

Expedition
against the
island.

Dec. 6,
1810.

Feb. 1811.
April 1811.
Aug. 4.
1 Sir S.
Auchmuty's
Desp. Aug.
31, 1811.
Ann. Reg.
1812, 225.
App. to
Chron.; and
James's
Naval His-
tory, vi. 26,
27.

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LXIV.

1811.

133.
Storming
of the out-
works of
Fort Cor-
nelius.

Aug. 8.

by art and nature, and defended by numerous redoubts, surrounded by stout palisades, and mounting two hundred and eighty pieces of cannon.

The chief force of the French and Dutch was in this formidable position, under their commander General Jansens; but a considerable detachment, about three thousand strong, occupied a more advanced post, also strengthened by fieldworks, two miles in front of the main body. Neither of these positions, however, commanded the road to the capital, which was accordingly occupied without opposition a few days after the landing; and from thence the troops marched against the enemy's advanced work, and drove them from it with great spirit, under shelter of the cannon of Fort Cornelius; the grenadier company of the 78th, as in almost every Eastern field of fame, heading the attack. When the victorious troops, however, came in sight of that stronghold, they were checked by the fire from its outworks, and the boldest paused at the sight of the difficulties which they had to encounter. The enemy, strongly intrenched, occupied a position between the great river Jacatra and the Sloken, an artificial water-course, neither of which was fordable. The front of this position, thus secured on either flank from attack, was covered by a deep ditch strongly palisadoed, within which were seven large redoubts, all planted with a formidable array of heavy artillery, garrisoned by a body of regular troops, much superior in number to the attacking force. Batteries were speedily raised opposite to these fortifications, which, though armed with guns inferior to those of the enemy both in number and calibre, shortly did great execution from the superior rapidity and precision of their fire. The season, however, was too far advanced, and the heat too violent, to admit of regular approaches; and, notwithstanding the strength of the intrenched camp, the English general resolved on an assault, which was fixed for daybreak on the 26th.¹

¹ Sir S.
Auchmuty's
Desp. Ann.
Reg. 1811,
226. App.
to Chron.
James, vii.
32, 33.

At midnight on the 25th, the assaulting columns moved from the trenches under the command of a most gallant and experienced officer, Colonel Gillespie. The right, under his own immediate direction and that of Colonel Gibbs, was directed against the enemy's redoubts beyond the Sloken, and had orders, if they succeeded in carrying them, to endeavour to force their way across the bridge which united that outwork to the main intrenchments. The left, under Colonel M'Leod, was to follow a path on the bank of the Jacatra, and commence an attack on that side when the firing was heard on the other flank; while the centre under General Wetherall, was to endeavour, in the general confusion, to force its way across the ditch in front. Notwithstanding the early hour and secrecy of the attack, the enemy were on the alert, and under arms at all points; but the devoted gallantry of the British troops, aided by the unflinching steadiness of the sepoy, overcame every obstacle. All the attacks proved successful. Colonel Gillespie, after a long detour through an intricate country, came to the redoubt on the right, stormed it in an instant, notwithstanding a tremendous fire of grape and musketry; and, passing the bridge with the fugitives, also carried the redoubt next in order, though defended in the most obstinate manner by General Jansens in person. The British force then divided into two, one column under Gillespie himself, the other under Colonel Gibbs, supported by Colonel Wood at the head of the heroic 78th, which, though long opposed, now burst in with loud shouts in the front of the lines, and successively carried the works on either hand; while Colonel M'Leod, on the extreme left, also forced his way into the redoubt which rested on the Jacatra, and gloriously fell in the moment of victory.¹

With equal judgment and valour, Gillespie lost not a moment in leading on the victorious troops to the attack of the enemy's park of artillery in the rear, which, with

CHAP.
LXIV.

1811.

134.

Storming of
the lines of
Fort Cor-
nelius itself.

¹ Sir S.
Auchmuty's
Desp. Ann.
Reg. 1812,
226, 230.
App. to
Chron.
James,
vi. 24.

CHAP.
LXIV.1811.
135.Results of
the victory,
and surren-
der of all
Java.
Sept. 26.

all the troops that defended it, fell into the hands of the conqueror. The victory was complete, though the severe loss sustained by the British, amounting to eight hundred and seventy-two killed and wounded, showed how obstinately it had been contested. The slaughter of the enemy within the works was very great ; above a thousand were buried on the field, besides multitudes cut down in the pursuit, and five thousand prisoners taken. No less than four hundred and thirty pieces of cannon were found in the intrenched camp, of which two hundred and eighty were mounted on the batteries and redoubts: the total pieces taken then, and in the citadel of Batavia and the outworks previously stormed, amounted to the enormous number of two hundred and sixty-four brass and five hundred and four iron guns and mortars, besides ammunition and military stores to an incalculable amount. This splendid exploit was soon after followed by the capitulation of the remaining troops who had escaped with General Jansens from the rout at Fort Cornelius, who, notwithstanding all his efforts, found it impracticable to prolong his defence. The whole of this noble island thus fell under the dominion of the British, (which, it must always be regretted, was relinquished by a misplaced generosity at a future time;) and Lord Minto said with great, but not unfounded pride, in his despatches to the government on the occasion, that "now the French flag was nowhere to be seen flying from Cape Comorin to Cape Horn."

¹ Sir S.
Auchmuty's
Desp. Ann.
Reg. 1811,
169. App.
to Chron.
226, 236.
James, vi.
24.

136.
Reflections
on the total
destruction
of the
French
colonial
empire.

Such was the termination of the maritime war between England and Napoleon ; thus was extinguished THE LAST REMNANT of the colonial empire of France. There is something solemn and apparently providential in the simultaneous march of these great powers to universal dominion on their respective elements, and in the establishment of the colonial empire of Great Britain on a scale of grandeur which embraced the whole earth in its arms. No such result could have been anticipated at

the commencement of the contest ; still less could it have been hoped for amidst the multiplied disasters with which its progress was attended. The maritime forces of England and France were very nearly matched at the opening of the war ; united to those of Spain, the latter were superior. Gibraltar was only revictualled during the American war by the nautical skill of Lord Howe ; and Plymouth beheld, for the first time in English history, its harbour blockaded by the triumphant squadrons of France and Spain. The colonial empire of France in 1792, though not equal, was a fair rival to that of England. In the West Indies she possessed St Domingo, an island then yielding colonial produce equal to that of all the British West India islands put together at this time ;* in the East, her flag or that of her allies waved over the Cape of Good Hope, the Isle of Bourbon, the Isle of France, Java, and the Malaccas—midway stations apparently set down for the transit of the commerce of the East to the European shores ; while, on the continent of Hindostan, her influence almost equalled that of England herself, and on the banks of the Jumna a force was organised, under French officers, superior to any which British energy could bring to bear against it.†

What was it, then, which subverted this vast and growing colonial empire ; which gave to the arms of England, amidst continual European disasters, a succes-

* It yielded £18,000,000 worth of colonial produce—that of the whole of the British islands in 1833 was only £22,000,000 ; and in 1839, in consequence of the emancipation of the slaves, it did not amount to £17,000,000. The total produce of the British West India islands—

	Sugar, hhds.			Rum, puncheons.
In 1833 was	271,700	.	.	61,700
In 1839	179,800	.	.	43,400
Falling off,	91,900	.	.	18,300

—*Colonial Magazine*, No. III. Appendix ; *Parliamentary Return*, 4th June 1833 ; and PORTER'S *Parliamentary Tables*, I. 64 ; *Ante*, Chap. XXXVI. § 7.

† They had thirty-eight thousand infantry and cavalry, and two hundred and seventy guns, all commanded by French officers, and trained in the European method.—*Ante*, Chap. XLIX. § 43.

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LXIV.

1811.

137.

What produced this wonderful result.

sion of maritime triumphs unparalleled in the days of Marlborough or Chatham ; and led to the total destruction of the Asiatic and American possessions of France, at the very time when Napoleon's forces had acquired universal dominion on the continent of Europe ? Evidently the French Revolution on the one hand, and the constancy of England on the other ; those mighty agents which at once dried up the maritime resources of the one country, and quadrupled the naval power of the other ; which poured forth a host of ardent democrats over the plains of Europe, and sent forth the British fleets conquering and to conquer on the waves of the sea ; which nursed in England the heroic spirit of conservative freedom, and let loose in France the irresistible energy of democratic ambition.

138.

Superiority of colonial to European conquest.

Even if the contest had terminated at this point, the fortunes of the British empire, though overshadowed at the moment by the grandeur of Napoleon's Continental victories, must now appear to the reflecting eye to have been in the ascendant. England, by wresting from her rival all her colonial settlements, had made herself master of the fountains of the human race. In vain France recounted the fields of European fame, and pointed to the world filled with her renown, the Continent subjugated by her arms. It was the seats of ancient civilisation, the abodes of departed greatness, which were thus subdued. Great Britain had cast her anchor in the waters of the emerging globe ; her flag waved on the infant seats of civilisation ; her seed was spreading over the future abodes of mankind. The conquest of the world which had been, however superior in present lustre, could never equal in durable effect the settlement of the world which was to be. There was to be found the ark which bore the fortunes of humanity ; there the progenitors of the Greece, and the Rome, and the Europe yet to come ; there the tongue which was to spread the glories of English genius, and the pride of English descent, as far as the waters of

the ocean extend. But the contest was not to terminate here. The rival powers, thus nursed to greatness on their respective elements, thus alike irresistible on the land and the sea, were now to come into fierce and final collision. England was to launch her legions against France, and contend with her ancient rival on her own element for the palm of European ascendancy ; the desperate struggle in Russia was to bring to a decisive issue the contest for the mastery of the ancient world. We are on the eve of greater changes than have yet been traced on the pages of this eventful history — fiercer passions are to be brought into collision than those which had yet stirred mankind in the strife : sacrifices greater recounted, glories brighter recorded, than had yet shed lustre on the human race.

Long, and to some uninteresting, as the preceding detail of the domestic transactions of Great Britain from 1810 to 1812 may appear, it will not to the reflecting reader be deemed misplaced even in the annals of European story. Amidst the multiplied scenes of carnage, the ceaseless streams of blood, which characterise the era of Napoleon, it is consolatory to linger on one spot of pacific disquisition. To the eye wearied with the constant mastery of nations by physical strength, it is refreshing to turn to one scene where mind still asserted its inherent superiority, and in moral causes was yet to be found the source of the power which was ultimately to rule mankind. Independent of the vast intrinsic importance of the questions which then agitated the British mind, and their obvious bearing upon the social interests which now are at stake in all the commercial communities of the globe, their influence on the contest which was then pending was immediate and decisive. The crisis of the war truly occurred in the British islands at this period. If any of the great questions then in dependence had been arranged in a different manner from that in which they actually were decided by the English parliament, the issue of the war — the fate of the world, would have been changed.

CHAP.
LXIV.

1811.

139.
Importance
of the pre-
ceding
domestic
detail of
British
transac-
tions.

CHAP.
LXIV.

1811.

140.

Fatal effects
which would
have follow-
ed the adop-
tion of the
Whig policy
at this time.

The accession of the Opposition to power when the restrictions upon the Prince Regent expired in 1812—the adoption by the House of Commons of the recommendations of the Bullion Committee—the abandonment by government of the Peninsular contest, in pursuance of the strenuous arguments of their parliamentary antagonists, would, any one of them, have speedily terminated the contest in favour of the French Emperor, crushed the rising spirit of Russia, extinguished the germ of European freedom, and affected, by the destruction of English maritime power, the whole destiny of the human race. Not less than on the fields of Leipsic and Waterloo, did the fortunes of mankind hang suspended in the balance during the debates on those momentous subjects. Interests more vital, consequences more momentous, than any that were contemplated by their authors, hung upon the lips of the orators, and quivered on the decisions of the statesmen. It is this which gives the debates of the British senate at this period their enduring interest; it is this which has rendered the chapel of St Stephen's the forum of the human race. The military glory of England may be outshone by the exploits of future states; her literary renown may be overshadowed by the greatness of subsequent genius: but the moral interest of her social contests, mirrored in the debates of parliament, will never be surpassed; and to the end of time the speeches of her illustrious statesmen will be referred to as the faithful image of those antagonist powers which alternately obtain the mastery in human affairs, and on the due equipoise of which the present happiness, as well as the future advancement, of the species is dependent.

APPENDIX.

CHAPTER LX.

NOTE A, p. 266.

The losses of Austria in population by this treaty were :—

In Galicia, to the grand-duchy of Warsaw, ...	1,500,000
—————to Russia, ...	400,000
In Germany, to Bavaria and the kingdom of Italy, ...	1,124,680
In Italy, to France and the kingdom of Italy, ...	480,680
	3,505,360

The population of Austria, after these losses, was 20,738,541 ; her frontier was destroyed, both towards France and Italy ; she was entirely cut off from all communication with the sea ; and she lost, besides all the harbours yielding customs, many of the most important mines of salt, silver, lead, and iron in her dominions.— See BIGNON, viii. 377 ; and HARDENBERG, x. 48–479 ; and SCHORLL, *Hist. des Traités*, ix. 297, 298 ; and *Congrès de Vienne, Rec. de Pièces Officielles*, iii. 57, 66.

CHAPTER LXI.

NOTE A, p. 314.

M. Champagny stated in his answer to Mr Canning's note, which announced the necessity of admitting the Spanish nation to the negotiation : " France and Russia can carry on the war, so long as the court of London shall not recur to just and equitable dispositions ; and they are resolved to do so. How is it possible for the French government to entertain the proposal which has been made to it of admitting to negotiation the Spanish insurgents ? What would the English government have said had it been proposed by them to admit the Catholic insurgents of Ireland ? France, without having any treaties with them, has been in communication with

them, has made them promises, and has frequently sent them succours. Could such a proposal have found place in a note, the object of which ought to have been, not to irritate, but to conciliate, and to effect a good understanding? England will *find herself under a strange mistake, if, contrary to the experience of the past, she still entertains the idea of contending successfully upon the Continent against the armies of France.* What hope can she now have, especially as France is irrevocably united to Russia? The only admissible basis is to receive as parties to the negotiation all the allies of the King of England—whether it be the king who reigns in the Brazils, the king who reigns in Sweden, the king who reigns in Sicily—and to take for the basis of the negotiation the *Uti possidetis*.” — CHAMPAGNY to Mr Secretary CANNING, 28th Nov. 1808; *Parl. Deb.* xii. 101.

NOTE B, p. 328.

The Budget of Great Britain and Ireland for 1809 stood as follows:—

INCOME.

Malt, pensions, &c., ...	£3,000,000
Surplus of consolidated fund, ...	4,000,000
Surplus ways and means, 1808, ...	2,757,000
War taxes, ...	19,000,000
Lottery, ...	300,000
Excess of exchequer bills, ...	3,154,000
Excess of do., ...	1,355,000
Vote of credit, ...	3,000,000
Loan, ...	11,000,000
Irish taxes and loan, ...	6,000,000
War income, ...	£53,566,000
Permanent taxes, ...	36,959,000
Net payments, ...	£90,525,000

EXPENDITURE.

Navy, ...	£18,986,000
Army, ...	21,144,000
Ordnance, ...	5,903,000
Miscellaneous, ...	1,900,000
Vote of credit, ...	3,300,000
Swedish subsidy, ...	300,000
Sicilian do., ...	400,000
Interest of exchequer bills, ...	1,927,000
War expenditure, ...	£53,650,000
Interest of debt, ...	24,313,000
Sinking fund, ...	11,359,000
Total, ...	£89,522,000

—See *Parl. Deb.* xiv.; *App. No. I.* p. 533; and *Ann. Reg.* 1809, p. 81.

CHAPTER LXIII.

NOTE A, p. 497.

Income and expenditure of Great Britain for 1810 :—

I.—INCOME.

Ordinary Revenues.

Customs,	.	.	.	.	.	.	£9,909,735
Excise,	.	.	.	.	.	.	18,495,178
Stamps,	.	.	.	.	.	.	5,546,082
Land and assessed taxes,	.	.	.	.	.	.	8,011,205
Post-office,	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,471,746
Crown lands,	.	.	.	.	.	.	110,273
Lesser sources,	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,250,697
Total permanent,	.	.	.	.	.	.	£44,794,916

Extraordinary.

Customs,	.	.	.	.	.	.	£3,906,483
Excise,	.	.	.	.	.	.	6,855,812
Property tax,	.	.	.	.	.	.	13,492,215
Lottery,	.	.	.	.	.	.	471,250
Irish loan,	.	.	.	.	.	.	2,448,470
Surplus fees of officers,	.	.	.	.	.	.	136,398
Loans, including £1,400,000 Irish,	.	.	.	.	.	.	13,242,356
Grand total net payments,	.	.	.	.	.	.	£85,350,900

II.—EXPENDITURE.

Interest of national debt, and charges of management,	£21,773,227
Sinking fund,	11,660,601
Interest of exchequer bills,	1,815,105
Civil list,	1,533,140
Civil government of Scotland,	118,186
Miscellaneous,	775,399
Navy,	20,058,412
Army,	18,536,300
Ordnance,	4,652,331
Loans to other countries, viz. :—	
Sicily,	£425,000
Portugal,	1,247,898
Spain,	387,294
	2,050,082
Miscellaneous,	2,270,867
	£85,243,620

—The total expenditure rose to £89,000,000.—*Parl. Deb.* xx. 1-15, *Appendix.*

NOTE B, p. 516.

The exact numbers were—						FORCES.
Etat-major and gendarmes,	.	.	.	.	.	229
2d corps, Reynier,	.	.	.	.	.	19,232
6th corps, Ney,	.	.	.	.	.	35,067
8th corps, Junot,	.	.	.	.	.	26,431
Reserve of cavalry, Montbrun,	.	.	.	.	.	5,117
Under Massena's immediate command,						86,076
In reserve under Drouet at Valladolid,	.	.	.	.	.	22,315
— under Serras at Benavente,	.	.	.	.	.	15,107
— under Bonnet in Asturias,	.	.	.	.	.	14,885
Total under Massena,						138,383
—NAPIER, iii. 568, <i>Table</i> .						

CHAPTER LXIV.

NOTE A, p. 623.

TABLE showing the progressive Number of Commitments in England, Scotland, and Ireland, in the undermentioned years.

Year.	England.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1805	4,605	—	3,600
1806	4,346	—	3,781
1807	4,446	—	3,522
1808	4,735	—	3,704
1809	5,330	—	3,641
1810	5,146	—	3,799
1811	5,337	—	4,162
1812	6,576	—	4,386
1813	7,164	—	—
1814	6,390	—	—
1815	7,818	No prior regular returns for Scotland.	No returns during this period in Ireland.
1816	9,091		
1817	13,932		
1818	13,567	—	—
1819	14,254	—	—
1820	13,710	1,486	—
1821	13,115	1,522	—

[Continued.]

TABLE—*Continued.*]

Year.	England.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1822	12,241	1,691	15,251
1823	12,263	1,733	14,632
1824	13,698	1,802	15,258
1825	14,437	1,876	15,515
1826	16,164	1,999	16,318
1827	17,924	2,116	18,031
1828	16,564	2,024	14,683
1829	18,675	2,063	15,271
1830	18,107	2,329	15,794
1831	19,647	2,451	16,192
1832	20,829	2,431	16,056
1833	20,072	2,564	17,819
1834	22,451	2,691	21,381
1835	20,731	2,837	21,205
1836	20,984	2,922	23,891
1837	23,612	3,126	14,804
1838	23,094	3,418	15,723
1839	24,443	3,409	26,392
1840	27,187	3,872	23,833
1841	27,760	3,562	20,796
1842	31,309	—	—

It is impossible to avoid the suspicion that, since 1836, some change, to conceal the fearful increase of Irish crime, has been made in the mode of making up the returns.—See PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, iii. 178–227.

That the spread of the mere power of reading and writing by means of education has no tendency to check this alarming progress, is clear from the subjoined analysis of the state of education of criminals in England and Scotland in the six last years, as obtained from the parliamentary returns.

Year.	Country.	Neither read nor write.	Could read and write imperfectly.	Well.	Super- educated.	Not known.	TOTAL.	
							Educated.	Uneducated.
1836	England,	7,033	10,988	2,215	191	562	13,969	7,033
—	Scotland,	539	1,427	489	55	—	1,921	539
—	Ireland,	10,030	3,056	7,234	—	—	10,310	10,030
1837	England,	7,464	10,298	2,234	101	515	12,633	7,464
—	Scotland,	693	1,772	520	68	73	2,360	693
—	Ireland,	6,336	3,056	4,511	—	—	7,567	6,336
1838	England,	7,943	10,334	2,057	79	481	12,490	7,943
—	Scotland,	551	2,070	630	93	74	2,793	551
—	Ireland,	6,808	2,773	4,727	—	—	7,500	6,808
1839	England,	7,296	13,071	2,062	78	636	15,210	7,196
—	Scotland,	610	2,104	508	57	—	2,661	610
—	Ireland,	6,647	3,620	6,468	—	—	10,088	6,647
1840	England,	9,058	15,149	2,053	101	666	17,303	9,058
—	Scotland,	851	2,297	559	71	—	1,927	851
—	Ireland,	8,400	3,620	6,468	—	—	10,088	8,400
1841	England,	9,220	15,732	2,253	126	669	18,111	9,220
—	Scotland,	696	2,248	554	42	—	2,334	696
—	Ireland,	7,152	3,084	5,651	—	—	8,735	7,152

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, iii. 201, 214, 215, 232.

The following Table exhibits the Progress of Crime in relation to Education in England for the last seven years, in centesimal proportions :—

Year.	Unable to read and write.	Able to read and write imperfectly.	Able to read and write well.	Instruction superior to reading and writing well.	Instruction could not be ascertained.	Total.
1836	33·52	52·33	10·56	0·91	2·68	100
1837	35·85	52·08	9·46	0·43	2·18	100
1838	34·40	53·41	9·77	0·34	2·08	100
1839	33·53	53·48	10·07	0·32	2·60	100
1840	33·32	55·57	8·29	0·37	2·45	100
1841	33·21	56·67	7·49	0·45	2·27	100
1842	33·35	58·32	6·77	0·22	2·34	100

—*Parliamentary Criminal Tables for the Year 1842.* Printed 5th May 1843. Preface, p. 7; and M'CULLOCH, *Stat. of Great Britain*, i. 476-7.

NOTE B, p. 626.

Table showing the amount of Bank Notes in Circulation from 1792 to 1815, with the commercial paper under discount at the Bank during the same period, and the gold and silver annually coined at the Bank :—

Year.	Total of Notes.	Commercial Paper rendered at Bank.	Bullion coined.
1792	£11,807,380	£————	£1,171,863
1793	11,888,910	————	2,747,430
1794	10,744,020	————	2,558,895
1795	14,017,510	2,946,500	493,416
1796	16,729,520	3,505,000	464,680
1797	11,114,120	5,350,000	2,600,297
1798	13,095,830	4,460,600	2,967,665
1799	12,959,610	5,403,900	449,962
1800	16,854,800	6,401,900	189,937
1801	16,203,280	7,905,100	450,242
1802	15,186,880	7,523,100	437,019
1803	15,849,980	10,747,600	956,445
1804	17,077,880	9,982,400	718,397
1805	17,871,170	11,365,500	54,668
1806	17,730,120	12,380,100	405,106
1807	16,950,680	13,484,600	None.
1808	14,183,860	12,950,100	371,714
1809	18,542,860	15,475,700	298,946
1810	21,019,600	20,070,600	316,936
1811	23,360,220	14,355,400	312,263
1812	23,408,320	14,291,600	None.
1813	23,210,930	12,330,200	519,722
1814	24,801,000	13,285,800	None.
1815	27,261,650	14,917,100	None.
1816	27,013,620	11,416,400	None.

—MOREAU's *Tables*; and PEBRER, 279. MARSHALL's *Digest*, pp. 971, 147, 236.

NOTE C, p. 650.

Table I., showing the Progress of Foreign and British Shipping from the year 1801 to 1823, when the reciprocity system began :—

Year.	BRITISH.		FOREIGN.		TOTAL.	
	Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.
1801	4,987	922,594	5,497	780,155	10,484	1,702,749
1802	7,806	1,333,005	3,728	480,251	11,534	1,813,256
1803	6,264	1,115,702	4,254	633,104	10,518	1,753,806
1804	4,865	904,932	4,271	607,299	9,136	1,512,231
1805	5,167	953,250	4,517	691,883	9,684	1,645,133
1806	5,211	904,367	3,793	612,904	9,004	1,517,271
1807	—	—	4,087	680,144	—	—
1808	—	—	1,926	283,657	—	—
1809	5,615	938,675	4,922	759,287	10,537	1,697,962
1810	5,154	896,001	6,876	1,176,243	12,030	2,072,244
1811	—	—	3,216	687,180	—	—
* 1812	—	—	—	—	—	—
* 1813	—	—	—	—	—	—
1814	8,975	1,290,248	5,286	599,287	14,261	1,889,535
1815	8,880	1,372,108	5,314	746,985	14,194	2,119,093
1816	9,744	1,415,723	3,116	379,465	12,860	1,795,188
1817	11,255	1,625,121	3,396	445,011	14,651	2,070,132
1818	13,006	1,886,394	6,238	762,457	19,244	2,648,851
1819	11,974	1,809,128	4,215	542,684	16,189	2,351,812
1820	11,285	1,668,060	3,472	447,611	14,757	1,115,671
1821	10,810	1,599,274	3,261	396,256	14,071	1,995,530
1822	11,087	1,664,186	3,389	469,151	14,476	2,133,337

Table II., showing the Progress of British and Foreign Shipping from 1823, the first year of the reciprocity system, to 1836 :—

Year.	BRITISH.		FOREIGN.		TOTAL.	
	Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.
1823	11,271	1,740,859	4,069	582,996	15,340	2,323,855
1824	11,733	1,797,320	5,653	759,441	17,386	2,556,761
1825	13,516	2,144,598	6,986	958,132	20,484	3,102,730
1826	12,473	1,950,630	5,729	694,116	18,202	2,644,746
1827	13,133	2,086,898	6,046	751,864	19,179	2,839,762
1828	13,436	2,094,357	4,955	634,620	18,391	2,728,977
1829	13,659	2,184,525	5,218	710,303	18,877	2,894,828
1830	13,548	2,180,042	5,359	758,828	18,907	2,938,870
1831	14,488	2,367,322	6,085	874,605	20,573	3,241,927
1832	13,372	2,185,980	4,546	639,979	17,918	2,825,959
1833	13,119	2,183,814	5,505	762,085	18,624	2,945,899
1834	13,903	2,298,263	5,894	833,905	19,797	3,132,168
1835	14,295	2,442,734	6,005	866,990	20,300	3,309,724
1836	14,347	2,505,743	7,131	988,899	21,478	3,494,672

* Records destroyed by fire.

Table III., showing the Progress of Exports to, and Shipping with, the countries with which reciprocity treaties have been concluded, compared with those with which there have been no such treaties, and the British colonies :—

		BRITISH.		FOREIGN.		EXPORTS.
		Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.	£
I. Reciprocity Countries.	1822. Total tonnage and exports to reciprocity countries,	3913	469,726	2708	383,924	18,084,013
	1838. Do. do.	5042	714,881	7044	990,328	21,270,705
II. Non-Recip. Countries.	1822. Do. do.	2573	407,847	676	82,432	8,355,854
	1838. Do. do.	4715	783,359	1599	217,515	15,101,765
III. British Colonies.	1822. Do. do.	4421	786,613	5	795	10,526,156
	1838. Do. do.	6362	1,287,157	29	2,823	13,689,267

Table IV., showing the amount of Shipping, distinguishing British from Foreign, employed between Great Britain and the undermentioned countries, from 1821 to 1839 :—

Year.	SWEDEN.		NORWAY.		DENMARK.		PRUSSIA.		FRANCE.	
	British Tons.	Foreign Tons.	British Tons.	Foreign Tons.	British Tons.	Foreign Tons.	British Tons.	Foreign Tons.	British Tons.	Foreign Tons.
1821	23,005	8,508	13,855	61,342	5,312	3,969	79,590	37,720	103,837	64,178
1822	20,799	13,692	13,377	87,974	7,096	3,910	102,847	58,270	101,098	49,727
1823	20,986	22,529	13,122	117,015	4,413	4,795	81,202	86,013	85,124	49,578
1824	17,074	40,092	11,419	135,272	6,738	23,689	94,664	151,621	82,650	52,648
1825	15,906	53,141	14,825	157,910	15,158	50,943	189,214	182,752	78,893	55,539
1826	11,829	16,939	15,603	90,726	22,800	56,544	119,060	120,589	89,301	57,171
1827	11,719	21,822	13,945	96,420	10,825	52,456	150,718	109,184	102,879	67,076
1828	14,877	24,700	10,826	85,771	17,464	49,293	133,753	99,195	102,623	63,302
1829	16,536	25,046	9,985	86,205	24,576	53,390	125,918	127,861	106,548	59,756
1830	12,116	23,158	6,459	84,585	12,210	51,420	102,758	139,646	110,766	111,779
1831	11,450	38,689	4,518	114,865	6,552	62,190	83,908	140,532	97,057	73,159
1832	8,335	25,755	3,798	82,155	7,268	35,772	62,079	89,187	110,793	63,509
1833	10,009	29,454	5,901	98,931	6,840	38,620	41,735	108,753	103,610	63,662
1834	15,353	35,910	6,403	98,303	5,691	53,282	32,021	118,111	128,017	74,382
1835	12,036	35,661	2,592	95,049	6,007	49,008	25,514	124,144	146,607	100,800
1836	10,865	42,439	1,573	125,875	2,152	51,907	42,567	174,439	198,339	108,352
1837	7,608	42,602	1,035	88,004	5,357	55,961	67,566	145,742	220,350	131,073
1838	10,425	38,991	1,364	110,817	3,466	57,554	86,734	175,643	273,446	171,577
1839	8,359	49,270	2,582	109,228	5,535	106,960	111,470	229,208	312,183	200,228

—*Parliamentary Paper, 28th May 1840.*

For the valuable Returns from which the preceding extracts are made, the British public are indebted to the motions of my able and eloquent friend, Mr Colquhoun of Killermont, M.P. for Kilmarnock, to whose exertions in the cause of religion and humanity Scotland and Ireland are already so much indebted.

NOTE D, p. 679.

BUDGET OF 1811.

INCOME, ORDINARY.

Customs, ...	£6,802,402
Excise, ...	18,489,914
Stamps, ...	5,090,478
Land and Assessed, ...	6,868,230
Post-office, ...	1,274,000
Small taxes, ...	87,605
Total ordinary Net, ...	£38,612,629
Hereditary Revenue, ...	65,814

War Taxes.

Customs, ...	£2,633,919
Excise, ...	6,410,139
Property Taxes, ...	12,941,155
Arrears, ...	14,336
Lottery, ...	281,386
Proportion of Irish Loan for England, ...	2,752,796
Smaller Sums, ...	253,866
	£63,965,990
English Loan, ...	16,636,375
Total, Britain, ...	£80,602,365
Irish loan and Taxes, ...	10,309,000
Grand total	£90,911,365

EXPENDITURE.

Interest of Debt, ...	£20,749,828
Life Annuities, ...	1,540,257
Sinking Fund, ...	13,084,274
Total of Debt Funded, ...	£34,374,359
Interest of exchequer Bills, ...	1,556,753
Total charge of debts, funded and unfunded, ...	£35,931,094
Civil List, ...	1,472,403
Do. Scotland, ...	109,693
Miscellaneous, ...	596,549
Navy, ...	19,540,678
Army, ...	23,869,359
Ordinance, ...	4,557,509
Loans to Foreign States, ...	7,410,039
Miscellaneous, ...	1,062,636
For United Kingdom, ...	£95,450,060
Deduct for Ireland, ...	4,489,462
	£90,960,598

—*Finance Accounts, Ann. Reg.* 1812, 398, 409; and *Parl. Deb.* xxii. 1-34, *App.*

NOTE E, p. 679.

BUDGET OF 1812.

INCOME, PERMANENT.

Customs, ...	£8,296,289
Excise, ...	17,800,248
Stamps, ...	3,313,986
Land and Assessed, ...	7,373,157
Post-office, ...	1,534,608
Smaller Duties, ...	90,692
Permanent and Annual Taxes, ...	£38,408,980
Hereditary Revenue, ...	106,630

War Taxes and Resources.

Customs, ...	£2,948,330
Excise, ...	5,206,754
Property Tax, ...	13,368,606
Lottery, ...	350,145
Proportion of Irish Loan, ...	2,793,313
Exchequer Bills repaid, ...	910,470
Smaller Sources, ...	352,931
Total, exclusive of Loans, ...	£64,446,159
Loans, including for Ireland, £4,350,000	
East Ind. 2,500,000	29,268,586
Total, ...	£93,714,745

EXPENDITURE.

Interest of Funded Debt, ...	£21,361,252
Life Annuities, ...	1,529,659
Management, ...	233,705
	£23,124,616
Sinking Fund, ...	13,482,510
Total charge of Debt funded, ...	£36,607,126
Interest of Exchequer Bills, ...	1,835,369
Total charge of Debt, funded and unfunded, ...	£38,442,495
Civil List, &c., ...	1,635,601
Do. Scotland, ...	112,748
Bounties, Pensions, Drawbacks, &c., ...	582,675
Navy, ...	20,500,339
Army, ...	24,987,362
Ordnance, ...	4,252,409
Foreign Loans, ...	8,204,028
Miscellaneous, ...	1,779,089

Carry forward,

Brought forward,	
East India Co.'s Loans, ...	2,498,000
Advance on Commercial Exchequer Bills, ...	1,375,141
Total, ...	£104,369,887
Deduct for Service of Ireland, ...	6,848,516
Total Expenditure of Great Britain, ...	£97,521,371

—*Financial Account* for the year ending 5th January 1813; *Parl. Deb.* pp. 2-23, 24; *Ann. Reg.* 1813, p. 328.

NOTE F, p. 682.

Proposition submitted by Mr Mackenzie, on behalf of the British Government, to the French Government, and rejected by them :—

“Projet d'une convention pour l'échange des prisonniers de guerre, présenté par M. Mackenzie à M. Moustier.”

“ART. I.—Tous les Anglais, tous les Espagnols, Portugais, Siciliens, Hanovriens, et autres sujets de, ou au service de, la Grande Bretagne, ou des puissances en alliance avec elle, qui sont maintenant prisonniers de guerre en France, en Italie, à Naples, en Hollande, ou dans tout autre pays en alliance avec, ou dépendant de, la France, seront relâchés sans exception.

“ART. II.—Tous les Français, Italiens, et autres personnes sujets de, ou au service de France ou d'Italie, tous les Hollandais et Neapolitains, et tous autres sujets, ou au service des puissances alliées de la France, qui sont maintenant prisonniers de guerre de la Grande Bretagne, l'Espagne, la Sicile, le Portugal, le Brésil, et dans tous autres pays en alliance avec la Grande Bretagne, ou occupés par des troupes Britanniques, seront relâchés sans exception.

“ART. IV. *Sect.* 1.—Tous les prisonniers Britanniques, de quelque rang et qualité qu'ils soient, qui sont détenus en France, et en Italie, et dans les dépendances de la France et de l'Italie, seront libérés. L'échange devra commencer immédiatement après la signature de cette convention, en envoyant à Deal ou à Portsmouth, ou à tout autre port d'Angleterre dans la Manche dont on sera convenu, ou en remettant aux commissaires Britanniques, qui seront nommés pour les recevoir, mille prisonniers Britanniques pour mille Français, qui seront relâchés par le gouvernement Britannique de la manière stipulée ci-après.

“*Sect.* 2.—Tous les prisonniers Français, de tout rang et qualité, maintenant détenus dans la Grande Bretagne, ou dans les possessions Britanniques, seront relâchés. L'échange commencera immédiatement après la signature de cette convention, et se fera en envoyant successivement à Morlaix, ou dans tout autre port Français de la Manche dont il pourra être convenu, ou en délivrant aux commissaires Français, mille prisonniers Français pour mille prisonniers Anglais, aussi promptement et dans la même proportion que le gouvernement relâchera les derniers.

“*Sect.* 6.—Lorsque tous les prisonniers Britanniques détenus en France, en Italie, et dans leurs dépendances, auront été échangés pour un nombre égal (à

régler et fixer sur le principe établi dans la section précédente de cet article) de prisonniers Français détenus en Angleterre et dans ses possessions, la balance de prisonniers Français qui pourront rester dans les mains de la Grande Bretagne seront relâchés sans délai, et envoyés en France, en échange d'un nombre égal de prisonniers de guerre Espagnols, lesquels seront envoyés à tels ports ou à telles villes d'Espagne qui seront convenus, et de la manière suivante.

"Sect. 13.—Tous les Portugais et Siciliens prisonniers en France, ou dans les pays alliés ou dépendant de la France, et tous les prisonniers appartenant à la France, et à ses alliés, qui seront dans les mains des Portugais et des Siciliens, seront relâchés mutuellement et de la même manière et aux mêmes conditions qui ont été stipulées ci-dessus par rapport aux Français et aux Espagnols, avec telles modifications seulement que les circonstances et la situation particulière de ces pays pourront requérir."—*Mémoires d'un Homme d'Etat*, ii. 438-484.

END OF VOL. IX.

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